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HISTORICAL TREATISES:

THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES
OF THE REFORMATION.

THE RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRACTICAL INFLUENCE
OF POLITICAL THEORIES.

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF THE CONTINENTAL
INTERESTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

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OXFORD: D. A. TALBOYS.

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PREFACE.

THE three Treatises contained in this volume, form, together with a Life of the Author, the first volume of the Historical Works of Professor Heeren, published at Göttingen, in the year 1821. The Life has been omitted from this translation, as belonging rather to a complete edition of an author's writings, than to such a selection as the present; and the order in which the treatises stand in the original, has, from motives of convenience, been changed: but in other respects, the form of the volume above mentioned has been pursued. The whole of it however, has not been translated by the same hand, and it is feared that some difference of style may, on that account, be observable in different parts of the work. Owing to the same circumstances also, considerable delay has occurred between the printing of the first two treatises, and of the third: to which must be attributed any incongruity which may exist between the dates mentioned in the notes of the Translator of the two former, and the date of the title-page. It is hoped, however, that, notwithstanding these circumstances, this volume will not detract from the high reputation, which previous translations from his works have deservedly acquired for Professor Heeren in this country.

OXFORD, *Sept.* 1836.

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFORMATION,

BEING A PRELIMINARY ATTEMPT AT AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION PROPOSED BY THE FRENCH NATIONAL INSTITUTE.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1802.

TO THE READER.

The following treatise was written in answer to a question proposed by the National Institute of France, as the subject of a prize essay for July 1803—viz. "What has been the influence of the Reformation on the political position of the different states of Europe, and upon the diffusion of knowledge[a]? This question, in itself so interesting, attracted my attention the more because the whole course of my studies have been directed towards it. I resolved therefore to attempt an answer to it; but when I had nearly finished the first part, which regards the *political* consequences of the Reformation, I learned from my late friend Von Villers that I should have him for a competitor. Upon this I withdrew myself, and his essay, which proved the successful one, and of which several editions have been published, is universally known. In the mean time I committed my work to the press, even before the day appointed for sending in the essays, but confined it to the political part of the question. The sheets were forwarded as soon as printed to my friend, and he has himself remarked in his preface, that he made use of

[a] Quelle a été l'influence de la reformation sur la situation politique des differens Etats de l'Europe, et sur le progrès des lumières?

them in working out this portion of his subject. Any service which I may thus have rendered him, he amply repaid me four years after by undertaking the translation of my essay upon the *Influence of the Crusades,* which then obtained the prize at Paris. I have thought it right to preface these remarks; partly, in order to show the relation in which my essay stands to that of my late friend; partly, to excuse the style of the treatise, which could not from the circumstances assume the character of a scholastical and learned dissertation.

It does not pretend to afford the learned historian anything new in the detail, but aims at presenting a *variety and abundance of general views,* which appear to me to be far from superfluous, inasmuch as a clearer light may thus perhaps be thrown upon the history of modern Europe.

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFORMATION.

The great political changes by which the destinies of mankind are permanently affected, and which we are accustomed to call by the general name of revolutions, may be divided, as regards their origin, into two classes. The first includes those which are the work of single individuals, the slaves of passion, who have devoted their lives to conquest, and founded their greatness upon the ruins of the states which fortune has enabled them to overthrow. These may be termed purely warlike revolutions, as they assume that character from the first, and war is their immediate aim.

Such were the exploits of Cyrus and of Timur, and of many other celebrated heroes, who, though at the head of civilised nations, have made conquest at once the first and last object of their career. Phenomena of this class may be highly interesting from their results, but in their origin they are less so, as they usually flow from one source, and that for the most part an unhallowed one—ambition.

The second class is of a very different charac-

ter, and may be best expressed under the joint name of *moral and political,* as its foundation is laid in the moral nature of man. Under this we range those revolutions which have been prepared by popular ideas, slowly spread, but finally become prevalent; and which by the direct contrast in which they stood to the existing order of things, could not but cause violent struggles and great changes in their passage from theory into practice. Like the stream which loses itself in the earth but a short way from its source, as if to accumulate its strength in secret, and breaks forth again a great river, these revolutions arise at moments when they are least thought of, and exhibit signs of strength which the most accurate observer could not have foreseen. These differ therefore from the former by being in the highest degree interesting, as well in their origin as in their consequences. Their general characteristic is that they are prepared long beforehand, and by a process which can hardly ever be discerned.—They thus afford the practised observer abundant employment from the very first; as it is not easy to discover their true origin, even though the immediate cause of their breaking out should be evident to the eye. They differ from the former also in this, that they seldom arise from one, but usually from many and different sources, and these, becoming united, form a torrent which finally bursts through every bulwark, and sweeps away whatever attempts to stem its course.

In order that ideas should become generally adopted and effective, they must be such as can be readily appreciated by the great mass of the people, and of sufficient interest to induce action as well as belief. Religion and politics are the only topics of this nature. Knowledge in its more difficult branches must always be confined to a limited number; nor do we ever read of wars caused between different nations by different systems of philosophy, although it may have chanced that some particular doctrines, by passing into popular opinions, have exercised an influence over their dealings with each other. On the other hand the ideas of God and of our country are too deeply interwoven with our moral nature to allow of their being entertained merely as objects of reason, and not of the affections also. In fact, the less defined they are, the greater influence do they appear to exercise; and hence it is that they possess the power of acting like electricity, even upon the most informed minds, and impart energies to them which assume with ease the character of enthusiasm, or even fanaticism.

Religious notions, it is true, do not seem to have a very near connection with political, but, even if the union of the state with its acknowledged forms of worship were less strict, these could seldom be overthrown without entailing the fall of more than can be originally foreseen.

Who shall define the channel of the torrent

which has burst its bed, or who set limits to the earthquake?

But however awful these shocks may be, it is by them more especially that the fortunes of our race are determined.—The moral, like the physical world, owes its purification and its maintenance to the storms which sweep over it.—But centuries and their generations must pass away before the operation of them is so fully developed as to allow the dim eye of human intelligence to embrace and give judgment upon the full extent of their results. And when this time at length arrives, when the enquirer at last may fairly enter upon his task, what occasion could he select, on which it would be more becoming to feel diffident of his own powers, and to bear continually in mind that his horizon is at best but of scanty extent, and that to review the unlimited universe of the history of man belongs only to a Being himself illimitable?

Since the fall of the Roman empire made way for the erection of the states of modern Europe, this portion of the world has witnessed three revolutions such as we have described. The deep degradation of its inhabitants during the middle ages is chiefly attributable to the want for many centuries, of an impulse which might call the minds of men, and not merely their bodies, into activity. Hence that overwhelming barbarism which in the tenth and eleventh centuries threatened to extinguish the last gleams of civilisation, till at the close of the latter the Crusades

were set on foot, and awakened the decaying spirit of mankind from the slumber which threatened to be its last. These expeditions, although fruitless in their immediate event, laid the foundation of a new order of things in Europe. Owing to them the peasantry was freed, although neither quickly nor universally, from the bondage of the feudal law; and while the young Muse of the Knighthood was gathering boldness to utter its conceits in castle and hall, they gradually, by the commerce which they brought to Europe, were the means of establishing in her towns that class of free citizens, on whose prosperity the future fate of nations was to depend.

After a lapse of four centuries Europe sustained a second and still greater change in the Reformation. And as this agreed with the former in the point of their common and immediate origin from religion, although both were undoubtedly of great political importance, it was reserved for our own age to witness a third species of revolution, which, springing immediately from political ideas, obtained an immediate political tendency; and which, when its results are fully developed, will perhaps furnish the historian of future times with even richer materials than either of those which have preceded it.

The National Institute, in requiring a development of the consequences which resulted to the political progress and general illumination of Europe from the Reformation, has chosen a subject worthy of itself. It is a proposition which

has never been satisfactorily answered, but which is now ripe for discussion.—Near three centuries have elapsed since that mighty change began to operate; its consequences have developed themselves in all their principal features; the clouds of prejudice and passion, which at first float over an age of great revolutions, and deny a clear view to the observer of the time, have now been long dispersed; and the historian must be content that his own feeble vision should bear the blame, if it cannot embrace the wide prospect before him.

The present enquiry is not directed to the consequences of the Reformation, as it affected the *intelligence* and *civilisation* of mankind—this subject is left to others. We shall simply investigate the political results of that event as they affected Europe—and these we shall clas under two heads: the 1st. comprising the changes in particular states. The 2nd. those which were wrought in the social and political system of Europe.

In an undertaking of this sort it is evident that the author must be prepared to lay aside the prejudices which his education, his country, and his religion, throw in his way—that he must resolve moreover not to sacrifice the truth, although known and acknowledged, to the brilliancy which invests what is new and paradoxical.—These I say are necessary and evident conditions.—It is only as to the sense in which the term "Consequences of the Reformation"

may be fairly used that any observation need be made. On this, however, the full attention of the reader is required, as it must necessarily determine the main features of our enquiry.

The consequences of every event are partly *immediate*, partly *mediate*.

The character of *immediate* consequences is that they must result of themselves from the very nature of a given event, and therefore be of the same stamp with it. The immediate consequences of a religious revolution can be concerned only with religion; and therefore as regards the revolution we are here speaking of, they include nothing but the changes in doctrine or worship of particular portions of the Christian Church.

The *mediate* consequences of an event differ from the former in not flowing from the essence of that event, but in being produced by accidental relations, connections, and changes of circumstance, in such a way however, as that without the existence of that event they would not themselves have existed.

It is at once evident that the sphere of the immediate consequences of every event must be comparatively much smaller than that of the mediate. But on this account a view which should be confined only to the former would be very partial—and although it may be urged that the chain of mediate consequences is endless, and therefore incomprehensible by the eye, since each operation gives an impulse to another and a new one—we must remember that the imper-

fection of our nature imposes a limit, and by subjecting us to the thraldom of time, restrains our view to that which is already determined.

Moreover we have a standard of easy application by which the degress of distance may be judged. Are all the circles which we form by throwing a stone into the water to be held uncertainly defined because those on the verge gradually escape the eye?

The influence of the Reformation on the politics and intelligence of Europe belongs to the class of mediate consequences, and the National Institute by proposing such a question has shown the extent over which it is intended that our enquiries should spread. It could not escape the proposers of the question that its chief interest lay in this very point—that on this very account it must needs be a proposition, the answer to which would bring a special ray of hope to the age in which *we* live. The distant results of every great revolution have deceived the expectations of the actors; and there is perhaps no higher gratification to the historian than to follow out the wonderful perplexities of the thread of events on which the fortunes of our kind depend. Submitting to its guidance he wanders on as in a labyrinth, which, amidst rocks and precipices, often opens to his view a landscape of surpassing beauty; and wrapped in wonder he catches amid the storm of ages the voice of Him who tells us, "that *His* ways are not our ways!"

Lift up your eyes then ye whom in your turn Fate has appointed to be the witnesses, the actors, the victims, of a Revolution! Ye who have lost a father, a brother, a friend, alas! perhaps your all! On the funeral piles of the Inquisition, on the battle-fields of Mühlberg, of Nördlingen and Lützen, innocent blood flowed as freely as our own age has seen it flow! and yet the clouds at length dispersed, and the day-star shone down upon a peaceful and a better world. The horizon clears up now faster than then, and perhaps we ourselves may yet witness those better times which it was in that case the lot only of later generations to enjoy.

Although the original tendency of the Reformation was very far from political, the intimate connection, which, in those days subsisted between Church and State rendered it unavoidable, that, as its influence widened, such a tendency should rapidly be acquired. It is true that at the commencement of the sixteenth century those relations were no longer in their full force, which during the preceding period had knit the whole of Western Europe as it were into one empire, composed of a number of princes whom the pope either held or claimed to hold, as vassals to the spiritual supremacy of his office. The temporal authority which had been established by Gregory the seventh was already broken down, not only by the disobedi-

ence and boldness of many of these spiritual sons of the church, but, and that perhaps in a still greater degree, by the errors of the Roman see itself. A schism of seventy years (1378—1449) at one period of which two popes, at another three, were busied in excommunicating each other, had rendered the Christian world disaffected, and had caused the assemblage of those general councils which asserted the fatal doctrine of their authority even over the head of the Church. But notwithstanding this, Church and State were far too closely interwoven throughout the Christian world, to allow of any change being wrought in the former which should not recoil on the latter. Although continual opposition was made to the claims of the pope to be recognised as arbitrator in secular matters, still by the spiritual jurisdiction of his office, and in several other ways, he exercised many most important rights, without denying which a Reformation could hardly even be imagined. As soon therefore as a measure of this kind was set afoot and began its necessary interference, the princes could not remain unmoved—neutrality was out of the question—and they were compelled to declare themselves either for or against it. In the latter case they set themselves in opposition to a party within their own dominions to which oppression would unavoidably give a political character; in the former they became the direct adversaries of the pope, and in this as in the other, the politi-

cal tendency of the Reformation was soon decided.

The moment at which it assumed this form necessarily doubled its importance. When the Reformation broke out there was no longer any great moral interest which could influence politics and breathe into them a spirit of life. Italy it is true had been taught a more refined policy by the necessity of maintaining the balance among her states, and this had spread even beyond the Alps, but under the hands of Ferdinand the Catholic it had assumed the form of mere systematical deceit. The influence which the nations of Europe had up to that time exercised by their representatives, upon their own affairs, began either to disappear entirely, or to become weak and unimportant. What shall we say of the Spanish Cortes under Ferdinand and Isabella, and still more under their successors? What of the English Parliament under Henry the eighth? What of the assembly of the States-general in France under Lewis the twelfth? All the threads of political power were in the hands of some few potentates who only abused their trust by spinning them into a web of wretched intrigue for the gratification of their own passions.—Whoever wishes for a proof of this, need only glance into the history of what passed in Italy at that time; and especially at the senseless league of Cambray and its romantic consequences.

The nations of Europe looked on unmoved

while this game of vice and folly was played at their expense; and this apathy was seasonably timed for their own more easy subjection to despotism, as it accorded with the encreased means of tyranny which the treasures of the new world, then first discovered, put at the disposal of their masters.

In order to awaken Europe from this moral slumber, there was wanted a *new and mighty interest* which should exercise a common influence over both people and princes; and in contemplating which the meaner spirit of cabal, till then most honoured, should be forgotten. Such an interest, both as to novelty and greatness, the Reformation created; and we thus obtain the proper point of view from which to estimate its political importance. Instead of the vulgar impulses of selfishness, Religion became the mainspring of politics; and we soon find hardly any political interest which was not more or less a religious interest, hardly any political party which was not more or less a religious one, nay hardly any war which was not in a greater or less degree a war of religion. It matters not how far philosophers may hold the doctrines for which men struggled to be right or wrong—the destinies of mankind depended upon their acquiring an interest in what was great and exalted; and that religion *is* in practical effect both great and exalted, even the atheist who scorns it in theory, must confess. It may be that with the new interest which was

here awakened, a host of prejudices and passions, which in partial instances led to error, was awakened also.—But this hindered not the progress of the whole!

To require that the human race should advance without interruption to its more perfect state, by the path which reason points out, is to mistake our nature, and to forget that we are not creatures of pure reason, but of reason mixed and alloyed with passion. It is difficult for individual man to tread that path, but for the crowd, which only approaches its object by circuitous ways, it is impossible.

FIRST PART.

Development of the Political Influence of the Reformation upon the Internal Relations of the different States of Europe.

GERMANY.

It was natural that the state in which the Reformation commenced should be the first to feel its consequences; but besides this, the internal condition of Germany was such as to make these consequences more violent here than elsewhere. The adherence of several of its princes to the Reformed doctrines facilitated the organisation of a powerful party, which watched over their infancy, and prevented them from being crushed or set aside, in a manner which would have been impossible in any country less divided within itself. It is well known that the elector, Frederic the Wise of Saxony, the ruler of the state in which Luther came forward, was the first who did the Reformation this service, although he was soon followed by others. It was thus at once made an affair of state; and by being soon after formally and openly treated as such, and brought, in 1521, before the diet of Worms for decision, it became so highly important in a political point

of view, that its very condemnation could only serve to make it still more so.

At the time of Luther's appearance Germany, as a state, was little more than a cipher in the political system of Europe. Full of strength within, it was yet unable to apply its power.—Its constitution, formed upon *prescription*, was scarcely better than a chaos. Even though the Golden Bull (1356) had sufficiently determined the relations between the head of the empire and the chief of its princes, who could say what the mutual rights of the emperor and the remaining states truly were? The degree of authority which he should possess was thus commonly dependent upon the character and personal power of the emperor. Under the long reign of Frederic III., who slumbered away above half a century upon the throne, (1440—1492,) this authority was nearly annihilated; and under that of Maximilian I., notwithstanding the new institutions, it was, as regarded its own interests, but little augmented.

On the other hand, there was not one of the remaining princes of Germany whose power was sufficient to command respect. They lived more like patriarchs than princes; the ruler of a country appeared to be little more than the chief proprietor in it. Moreover, there was scarcely a prospect that any house would be able to raise itself to sudden eminence. The undivided transmission of property was observed only in the electoral states: in the others, according to

custom, the lands of the father were divided among his sons; and, as their marriages were often blessed with even too rich an abundance, it was difficult for a single family to amass any great and secure possessions in land. This weakness of individuals necessarily rendered the power of the whole body inconsiderable. It is true the princes met at the diets to discuss their common interests; but Frederick III. had not even been at the trouble of once attending these meetings in person; and his son, whose numerous projects required proportionate funds, came, for the most part, only to harass the states for supplies. In fact, if the impetuous advance of the hereditary foes of Christendom, who had for fifty years been securely settled in the east of Europe, had not frequently compelled the Germans to make common cause against them, there seems to be no reason why the bands of the empire should not have been wholly dissolved.

It was the Reformation, and the Reformation alone, which suddenly breathed new life into this decaying body, and gave it the political importance which it has since possessed. Many of the German princes soon declared in its favour, (whether from conviction or on other grounds it matters not); while, on the other hand, the the new sovereign of the empire found it in accordance with his interests to condemn it. Charles V. soon discovered that in the advocates of the Reformation he had to deal with a party which was forming against himself; and al-

though his original repugnance to the protestant doctrines, as they now began to be termed, may perhaps have been founded upon religious conviction, yet the hatred which he entertained towards them soon became purely political. Charles V., however, was not the man to allow himself to be blinded by passion; it was to him only the groundwork of a project which soon occupied his whole attention, as far as it was directed to the government of Germany, and the design of which was to maintain and increase the imperial power by the suppression of the party opposed to him. As soon, however, as this party perceived their danger, a closer alliancé, among the protestant princes and states, was the natural consequence.

Thus, after the league of Smalcald (1530), both parties stood, prepared for war, awaiting the contest; nor would this have been so long delayed, had not the emperor been engaged upon some other of his numerous undertakings. When, at length, a lapse of sixteen years had brought matters to the point he wished, and he fairly took the field (1546), the result showed that the courage of his opponents was not equalled by their abilities; while the issue of the battle of Mühlberg (1547) seemed to exceed even his boldest hopes. He had scarce, however, begun to enjoy the fruits of his victory, when the daring hand of a stripling tore from his grey head the laurels which a few days sufficed to lose, but which it had taken a life of

labour to collect; and Maurice, by the treaty of Papau (1552), dispelled all the dreams of ambition in which Charles had so long revelled.

Such, in a few words, was the progress of events which occurred in the German empire at this momentous crisis, and which determined its future fate. But even then Germany had ceased to be the Germany of olden times. The new and mighty interest which had been awakened, produced a corresponding change in the politics of the empire. Its princes had learnt to estimate their power; they had found themselves in a position which obliged them to call it into action; and, although the preliminary treaty of Papau, confirmed as it was by the subsequent peace, concluded 1555 at Augsburgh, had secured equal constitutional rights to both the new and the old party, it was impossible that they should relapse into their former indolence, and with it, into their former political nonentity. Although the words of peace were on men's lips, they had not put away resentment and distrust from their hearts; the new energy which the Reformation had imparted to politics remained in full force; the two parties watched each other ready armed for a struggle; or if they laid aside their weapons for a moment it was only to resume them upon the first appearance of danger.

Besides this, the previous peace had been procured too cheaply to allow of its being durable. Great revolutions are not to be decided by the struggle of a moment; and more than this the

fortunate attempt of Maurice can hardly be considered. Notwithstanding the peace, Germany resembled the sea while still heaving from the effects of a storm, and for a long time it remained under the influence of revolutionary feelings, which promised a new explosion at every moment; indeed, were it not for the explanation, which is afforded by the personal characters of the three immediate successors of Charles V., history could scarcely present a more extraordinary phenomenon than the continuance of this state of things down to the year 1618, when the thirty years' war at length broke out. The treaty of Westphalia, which concluded it, finally and fully decided the strife between the two parties, and gave to the German empire that constitution, which, down to our own times, has been considered the palladium of its existence.

Thus to the Reformation and its consequences the German body owes the form which it has since assumed, and the vital spirit by which it is animated. It was scarcely conceivable that such a political body, comprising as it did so many and such different states, should for a length of time be kept in activity by any one common interest. For such a purpose what point of union should we have been inclined to select? A desire of aggrandizement, or at least of a powerful influence over the affairs of foreign nations? Such a desire could not exist in a state which, although amply endowed with means of resis-

tance, possessed scarce any of attack.—Perhaps a common commercial interest? Germany had no such interest, nor could have, owing to its geographical position and its division into small states. There remains therefore but one—that which depended upon the necessity of a common resistance to attacks from without. History, however, shows, by abundant instances, that such causes are transitory, and that with them the interest they call up must pass away also; and the history of Germany in particular has shown how easy the enemies of the empire found it to acquire friends in a state so composed; and to make war upon Germans by the assistance of Germans. The internal union of this body of states was, therefore, nothing but a slow and lingering disease; which, while it maintained a show of health in its subject, was on that account preparing it the more surely, either for total dissolution, or for subjection—it matters not whether to its own superior, or to a foreigner—but in both cases for its destruction.

It was only by a *Spirit of Disunion* that it could be fairly roused into life; and this the Reformation produced by giving separate and peculiar interests to the Protestant and Catholic parties. It cannot be denied that it was impossible accurately to foretell what the consequences of these divisions might be. The interference of foreign powers in the contest appeared, as in fact it was, inevitable; a concurrence of fortunate circumstances, however, averted the

consequences which were thus threatened, and that often more successfully than could have been expected. Moreover, if the separate interests of the two parties had been of such a nature as to render it impossible that they should become subservient to the interests of the empire, or, still worse, if they had been opposed to it, a total dismemberment might have been the result. Luckily, however, this was not the case; neither interest contained in itself any thing contrary to the rights of the head of the empire, or of the individual states: they centered upon the subject of religion and the rights connected with it; and, after abundance of feud and warfare, it was sufficiently ascertained by experience, that the establishment of the Corpus Evangelicorum —which did not receive its definite form till long after the thing itself had existed (1653)—tended to no irremediable division between the diet and the empire. On the contrary, the mutual watch which the two parties kept upon each other, and the constant attentiveness which they showed, often with good reason, sometimes in a degree almost ridiculous, to the slightest advances of their antagonists, afforded a warrant for the maintenance of the German Constitution, at least in its principal parts, which could certainly not have been furnished in any other way. From this more elevated point of view, all those dissensions, debates, and wars, which the Reformation produced in the interior of this body, appear in a more gentle light; they are reckoned only as the

means to an end; and if it was the Reformation which at its commencement breathed new life into the empire, it was the Reformation also which for a long time maintained this life and assured its political existence.

AUSTRIA.

THE house of Austria—which of all the dynasties of modern times has lost and won the most—was the first to found its political schemes upon the disturbances of the Reformation. Fate presented it at this crisis with a prince who was superior to all his contemporaries in political talent, and at least equal to any of them in power. It requires abilities of a rare kind to make their possessor feel at home in a new order of things such as a revolution is apt to produce. A great genius alone is capable of rising above the routine of previous experience and custom, and of calculating the combinations by which its measures are to be directed. But however willing we may be to do justice to the political talents of Charles V., it was impossible that he should from the first be able to foresee the course which these violent revolutions would take, at least by any direct process of calculation.

The relation in which he stood to the pope, as Protector of the Church, made him from the beginning an opponent of the Reformation; but his political designs in Germany were not formed till he found in the league of Smalcald (1530)

a party armed in direct opposition to himself. The maintenance of the respect due to the majesty of the empire required that this should be suppressed; but then its suppression, even though the existing forms of the constitution should be observed, could hardly be effected without the introduction of absolute power into Germany. That this plan was frustrated, and in a way which no previous calculations could have determined, has been already observed; but still the new doctrines were not the less important as regarded the organisation of the Austrian monarchy, even though it did not play a prominent part in the game.

We may remark here, that in the hereditary duchy of Austria, the power of the reigning house became nearly absolute—while that of the states was reduced to a mere shadow—by the suppression of the protestant party under Ferdinand II. It derived also the greatest possible advantage from the use which it made of the religious disturbances in Hungary and Bohemia. The house of Hapsburg may thank the Reformation for the opportunities which it afforded them of converting both these states from electoral into hereditary dominions; and of rearing in the latter an absolute sovereignty on the ruins of their ancient national freedom. When the battle of Prague (1620) left the rebellious nation a prey to the tyranny of its conqueror, the moment was not let slip. It was robbed of its privileges, and Bohemia

became in FACT an hereditary kingdom, although politicians were still left to dispute whether it should be *called electoral* or not.

The fate of Hungary, although not so immediately decided, was not less owing to the religious disputes of the Reformation. The new doctrines found so ready an admittance here, that the supporters of them soon formed a counterpoise to those of the older creed, and at length, by the peace of Vienna (in 1606) and the capitulation of king Matthias (1608), obtained not only the free exercise of their religion, but, by the latter event, equal political rights with them. The history of Hungary, however, has made it sufficiently known how little the collisions of party were put an end to by these concessions; how little the promises made to the protestants were observed; how advantage was taken of the excitement which prevailed to introduce foreign troops, and, notwithstanding all remonstrance, to maintain them in the country; and, lastly, how systematically the most crying oppression was practised, till it at length (1670) produced conspiracies, the extinction of which necessarily augmented the power of the government. The web of strife, however, was not yet broken off, and its meshes had so thoroughly entangled the protestant contests with those of Transylvania and the Porte, that it is almost impossible to follow out the separate threads. The dealings with the protestants, however, evidently formed the groundwork of the tissue.

Preparations were thus gradually made for the step which was at length (1687) successfully taken, and the electoral kingdom became hereditary. Nor were the advantages which Austria thus obtained the less important because Hungary has hitherto resisted, with tolerable success, all the attempts which have been made to overturn its remaining rights as a nation.

However little cohesion, then, there may be between the different parts, in themselves so powerful, which compose this monarchy, it chiefly owes to the Reformation, and to the manner in which its consequences were applied, whatever unity and internal stability it possesses. The late changes in Europe have encreased its power, both by extending its dominions, and by teaching it how to apply its resources. It has now[a] no distant territory to protect; but placed as it is in continual opposition to powerful adversaries, and deprived of the outworks which formerly guarded it, it must make the best use of those advantages to which the Reformation prepared the way, in order to maintain the proud station which it at present occupies.

PRUSSIA.

THE foundation of the Prussian monarchy was one of the earliest works of the Reformation. It was doubtless beyond mortal power to foresee

[a] It must be remembered that this was written in 1802. TR.

that so noble a structure should ever be raised upon it. Such a result required a concurrence of fortunate circumstances, and a taskmaster to guide the work, such as hardly any state could show within the annals of a like period of time. And yet the thing is so—without the Reformation, Europe would have had an elector of Brandenburgh, but no king of Prussia. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, Prussia was still under priestly dominion, being attached to the Teutonic order which had conquered it; and which, with its grand master, continued to govern it. But scarcely had the new doctrines spread themselves, and pointed out a way by which spiritual princes might render their power hereditary, than Albert, grand master of the Teutonic order in Prussia, and a scion of the house of Brandenburgh, made the first successful attempt of this kind.

As early as the year 1525 he secularised his dominions, and formed them into an hereditary duchy, though as a fief of Poland, and became by his marriage the founder of a line, of which the last female descendant, Anne, espoused John Sigismund, then electoral prince of Brandenburgh, and afterwards elector. When Prussia came into the possession of the electoral house of Brandenburgh, it was still a fief; but by the treaty of Wehlau (1657), and more fully by the peace of Oliva (1660), it was declared a sovereign principality, and its feudal tenure was done away; in 1701 it was raised to a kingdom, and stepped,

or at least gradually advanced, into the first rank of European powers.

Although the Reformation, however, was the means, as we have shown, of laying the first stone of the Prussian monarchy, it cannot be said that it conduced greatly to its farther erection, unless we are prepared to consider the acquisitions, which it made at the peace of Westphalia, as resulting from that event.

The Reformation has, in fact, exercised a much smaller influence on the double part which Prussia has played in foreign policy, both as one of the powers of Europe, and as one of the first states in the German empire, than is commonly supposed. The causes of this may be sufficiently gathered from the short chronological sketch which we have just given. During the whole period throughout which the interests of religion continued to act as a mainspring in European politics—that is, down to the peace of Westphalia, and the time of Lewis XIV., the house of Brandenburgh was still too weak to exercise any decisive influence upon the German body, to say nothing of Europe at large. As it gradually after this acquired strength under the great elector and its two first kings, the Reformation, as we shall hereafter have to observe, lost all political power, and a new interest took its place. The second, and minor game, which Prussia had to play in the empire, was to maintain the balance against Austria. But Prussia did not fairly become the rival of Austria till

the conquest of Silesia by Frederick II., and their relative position was wholly uninfluenced by religion. Besides, although Prussia or Brandenburgh was one of the most powerful, and finally the most powerful, of the protestant states, it cannot be considered as the head of that party. This pre-eminence belonged, as is well known, from the first, to Saxony; and when Prussia became the more powerful of the two, the matter was no longer of consequence, since this *party*, although it retained the forms of one, was fast losing its essential character as such.

FRANCE.

It was chiefly from Switzerland that France derived its share of the Reformation; and although it was thus influenced rather by the doctrines of Zwingle than those of Luther, yet the political sphere of these two reformers was so nearly the same, that it would be impossible to define that of the one without ascertaining that of the other also. In no other country of Europe, not even in Germany, had the Reformation been so speedily advanced as in Switzerland. The energetic character of these mountaineers leads them to a rapid decision; and the more confined the ideas of a race of herdsmen may be, the more earnestly do they cling to those which they have once adopted. While in Germany the two parties were still engaged with capitulations,

the civil war broke out in the cantons (1530), and seemed to threaten a total dissolution of the confederacy. Fortunately, however, a short struggle sufficed to produce a lasting peace; and although the mutual hatred of the parties did not immediately pass away, it was not again thought necessary to shed blood for its satisfaction. Bitter feelings gradually subsided; public attention became directed to other subjects; and the enviable fate of this country, which general opinion seemed to agree in considering holy and inviolable, removed it from a participation in the affairs of the rest of Europe, which might easily have lit up the flame of discord anew.

The numerous relations which existed between Switzerland and France, afforded peculiar facilities of access to the Reformation from this quarter; could it have been expected then that a nation, which perhaps may be said to exceed all others in the quick perception of ideas, should long remain indifferent to it? Francis I., however, knew too well how much the kingly power had to fear from a party whose church principles were almost purely democratic, to allow of his encouraging it; the oppression and persecutions of his son gave it consistency, and prepared it for resistance; and when under his weak descendants it lent itself to the ambitious purposes of men in power, it assumed the character of a formidable opposition. The history of the bloody wars which were thus prepared, and which occupied the latter half of the sixteenth

century, down to the edict of Nantes (1562—1598), is so well known that we need not do more than allude to them; the permanent influence which they exercised upon the political condition of France, is, however, too important to be passed over. This influence may be considered under two points of view, and these in apparent opposition to each other. It prepared the way on the one hand for the absolute power of the king, and yet on the other it seems, even after the fall of its party, to have maintained a spirit of resistance in the nation.

It is a common phenomenon in great monarchies, that the power of the government does not become firmly established, and either wholly, or in great part, absolute, till it has undergone a struggle with some strong party in opposition to it. At the moment when such a party has been suppressed or disarmed, everything is open to the sovereign; and even the remaining props of national liberty may be easily put aside. In France the government found such an opposition as we describe, in the party of the Hugonots. It is true that it was the government itself, which by its persecutions, its duplicity, and utter cruelty, converted a friendly *sect* into a *party* of political opponents. This cannot be denied—the cry of death which was raised on St. Bartholomew's night, and echoes to all ages, is too strong an evidence of this; but still an unprejudiced observer must confess, that the foundation of any stable government in France must

needs have remained impossible, as long as this party continued to hold arms in its hands.

The edict of Nantes had undoubtedly softened down their violence:—on such fearful storms as had here raged, a period of calm must at any rate follow—; but the events which occurred after the murder of Henry IV. served to show how formidable the Hugonots still were.

It was difficult for any great and effectual measures of government to be carried through without coming in contact with them; for such a party cannot for any time exist without involving its own interests with the interests of the state, in such a multiplicity of ways as to afford abundance of real, or, what is in effect the same, imaginary points of excitement. The struggle which Richelieu maintained against the Hugonots was, therefore, a necessary struggle, if any permanent order of things was to be established in France: he wished to disarm but not to extirpate them; and the condition in which they were left by the peace of Rochelle (1629), was such as in accordance with law, they ought to have been placed in; although, at the same time, no one will pretend to extenuate the persecutions in which the intolerance of subsequent governments led them to indulge, down to the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

But in proportion as we find it easy to show the truth of our first remark, do we find it difficult to adduce historical proof of the other, its

apparent contradiction, viz. that the maintenance of a spirit of resistance in the people was owing to the Hugonot party. It is not, however, the less true on this account: for in the first place, we cannot doubt that such fearful disturbances as those which were caused by the religious disputes in France, must have left traces in the national character which could not easily be effaced. But, besides this, history has not left us without proofs. It is well known that, after the time of Richelieu, the spirit of opposition which had been raised, passed into the parliament of France. The degree of influence which the Reformation exercised in this case cannot be clearly determined without lengthened details. But it would be difficult to deny such an influence altogether, since by the edict of Nantes the protestants were allowed a share in the counsel of this body—although their admittance is neither the only nor the principal source, to which we should seek to refer it. Of this, as of their other rights, the protestants were again deprived by the revocation of the edict; but the spirit of the party was not destroyed by its suppression; it acquired new life, with such modifications only as the change of times rendered necessary, under the garb of Jansenism. A full development of its progress is beyond the limits of this treatise; but we may observe, that the history of literature shows plainly enough that this party derived warmth and vigour from the flame, which the learned disputes of the protestants and their

opponents had kindled in the theology of France. These debates were succeeded by others which produced the great catastrophe of our own day, and by which the Reformation and its political consequences were thrown into the background; but on that account became, in the full sense of the word, more peculiarly the property of history.

ENGLAND.

The Reformation was of still more importance to England than to France; the new doctrines were triumphant here, as they were, and continued to be, suppressed there; and these two nations—the antipodes of each other in so many respects—were destined to a still wider difference by disagreeing on this point. The important consequences which resulted to the two countries, in their relation to each other, and to Europe in general, from this circumstance, belong to the second division of our subject; we have here only to consider the effects thereby produced upon England itself.

The progress of the Reformation was of a peculiar kind in this country, as we might expect from its insular character. Henry VIII. viewed it only as a means of gratifying his passions and serving his personal interest, and as such, in fact, he used it; but a tyrant, who was guided by the whim of the moment, and incapable of forming any permanent scheme, could not

employ it with the ability of Charles V.; while by his supremacy, he exercised a more violent despotism over the conscience and opinions of his subjects than the pope would ever have dared to attempt. During the short reign of his son and successor, Edward VI. (1547—1553), the Reformation was really introduced; but as the bigoted intolerance of his sister Mary (1553—1558) again overturned the feeble and scarce completed edifice, it was reserved for the long and well conducted reign of Elizabeth (1558—1603) to lay its foundation anew, and upon more secure ground.

The Articles of belief in England were changed; the supremacy of the Roman see was shaken off; but in other respects the framework of the hierarchy was left untouched. By the act of supremacy, renewed under Elizabeth as it had first been passed under Henry, the king stepped into the place of the pope; and this supremacy was probably the chief advantage which accrued to the crown from the Reformation. In times when religion was so inseparably connected with politics, such unlimited spiritual dominion necessarily tended, in substance if not in form, to render the temporal power unlimited also; and the "High Commission" of Elizabeth gives a sufficient example of the uses to which it might be applied. Again, as the Head of the Church required instruments by which it might act as such, the existent hierarchy was left almost unaltered in its ancient

form. The episcopal church was thus established; which received its definite rule of faith for the first time under Elizabeth, (1571.) The English church, therefore, was distinguished by the peculiarity of its organisation in retaining the higher spiritual orders—the archbishops and bishops—with seats and voices in the upper house. In this manner the hierarchy remained interwoven with the constitution; and the question which we are interested in answering here, regards the value and consequences of this institution to the state.

It was the belief, very naturally resulting from the king's supremacy, that the hierarchy would prove a firm support to the throne at its head, which preserved that body; a belief which afterwards furnished the Stuarts with their favourite maxim: "No bishop, no king." Nevertheless, the connection asserted in this sentence is by no means so directly evident as to make it unreasonable to enquire whether it had any truth at bottom, or was merely the product of fanaticism.

The political power of the bishops, and their direct influence upon the state through the house of lords, is too insignificant to have been much relied on. If we are, therefore, to attribute any meaning to the above expression, it must be this: that by uniting the interests of the heads of the church with those of the crown, it was designed, that not only their support, but that of the people itself, should be

secured. The political importance of the bishops, therefore, depended upon their influence with the people. And, consequently, as soon as the schismatics had acquired strength, and formed themselves into a religious, and as such, into a political party, experience showed that the bishops, although nominally the props of the throne, were but a feeble support. They fell with it, and they were restored with it.

As regards the general question, how far the hierarchy of a state may be called the safeguard of the throne, this must depend chiefly upon the spirit of the times; since by it their influence over the minds of the people is determined. In times of religious fanaticism this may be very great, and the permanence of the throne may be inseparably linked with that of the hierarchy. The progress of events, however, gradually dissolves these ties; and the throne of Great Britain at present rests upon very different support from that of the hierarchy, which is neither important, nor inviolable, except as forming an integral part of the constitution.

But if the Reformation on the one hand laid the foundation of an increase of the kingly power in England, it did not do this without creating a disaffected party on the other; which, when the helm of state passed into a less experienced grasp, was the means of raising a storm under the violence of which the throne gave way, and for a long time remained prostrate.

In times like those such a Reformation as that in England, which was in a certain sense only half a Reformation, was necessarily a dangerous undertaking. A period of revolution will not submit to partial measures, because it is a period of fanaticism. What else then could be expected, than that, in the eyes of the *pure* reformers, the remaining framework of the hierarchy should be deemed an abomination? That episcopalians and catholics should be held to differ in little except in name? And when the Church of England was finally guarded about by limits which excluded all other communions from a participation, not only in it, but in the most important political rights, how could it be otherwise than that a contest should ensue? Then, as the religious principles of the insurgents were purely democratic, what was more natural than that the fate of the hierarchy should include that of the throne?

Considered from this point of view the events of the English revolution, which are too well known to require any further notice, appear in their proper light, as one connected whole. With the restoration of the throne the dominant church was restored also; but when, by the famous toleration act of William III. (1688), the penal laws against the dissenters were removed, they could no longer form a political party. With the catholics it was no doubt different; but their number in England was too small to cause apprehension. There may cer-

tainly be times, and there have been in England, when the introduction of a Test Act may be necessary; but whether its continuance conduces most to security or danger, is a question which I shall leave others to answer. However this may be, the general interests of Great Britain remained inseparably connected with the Reformation; and by it, after one of the most wonderful revolutions of destiny, the throne was opened to that family under whose glorious dominion England witnessed the appearance of what may, in every sense of the word, be termed her golden age.

But while speaking of the mistress of the sea, let me be allowed to throw a glance upon that neighbouring island, which having been subject to her for centuries, has been deluged with blood, whenever it has dared to shake the fetters which bound it. While the Reformation spread its blessings, sooner or later, over other lands, Ireland appears to have been destined only to feel its curse. The wounds which it dealt here, were too deep to be scarred over; and even since the efforts of a more liberal policy have been directed to their cure, it must be left to time to decide whether the means applied will be sufficient.

Long before the Reformation, the inhabitants of Ireland had been expelled from part of their possessions by English colonists; and a hatred of their conquerors had been engendered, to which the Reformation gave new vigour. The

Irish remained catholic, if for no other cause than that their oppressors were protestant.

Being again plundered of a considerable portion of their lands, when James I. sent over a new host of colonists, their disaffection was encreased; and during the civil wars under the hapless Charles, a fearful insurrection broke out (1641), which cost above a hundred thousand of the protestants in Ireland their lives, and went near to exterminate them altogether.

The civil war now raged for ten years without interruption, till it gave Cromwell a pretext for new acts of injustice, the real object of which was to reward his soldiers. Maltreated, plundered, and hunted into a corner of the island, the Irish saw three parts of their country in the hands of strangers. But even thus the measure of their unhappiness was not yet full. The same revolution which restored, and improved, the English constitution, and secured the national freedom, was to the ill-fated Irish a source of new persecutions, and of final subjection. When William III. had established his authority here with the sword (1691), the miserable remnant of their lands was torn from them by proscription; and what was even worse than this, a *legal* despotism was soon after established, such as no other country of Europe has ever witnessed. By the statutes of Anne (1703), the catholics, as long as they adhered to their religion, were incapable of holding land either in freehold or lease, and were denied the means of public education.

In other countries where the subject was the bondsman of his master, care at least was taken of him, and sustenance supplied. Personal freedom was left to the Irish, that it might become a burden and a curse to them. By an organized system of oppression, the people were reduced to a horde of brutal paupers; and the consequences were such as might have been expected. The Irish revenged themselves whenever they could, and their revenge was that of barbarians, because they had been made such. It was in vain that under George III. a less inhuman system of government began to improve whatever still admitted of improvement; in vain that the independence of America released Ireland from her commercial fetters (1782); a feeling of misery so long endured is not to be forgotten within a few years; the traces of such deeply impressed barbarism are not wont to disappear in a single generation.

The revolution of our own day found Ireland in that convulsive state into which it had been thrown by those of former times, and while still under this influence it was exposed to a new and bloody crisis, which was followed by the Union, in 1800.

By this measure the two countries were formed into one state, and the Irish parliament incorporated with that of Great Britain. It does not appear, however, that its beneficial results will be fully developed till the political equality of the catholics and protestants of Ireland shall

have been finally established, by the admission of the former into parliament[b].

THE UNITED NETHERLANDS.

While other states were either shaken or new-modelled by the Reformation, there was one which was created by it. From the midst of its disturbances the republic of the United Netherlands came forth like a bright star between the pauses of the storm; while, by the mode of its origin, its fate became inseparably connected with the Reformation; and its fall or maintenance dependent upon the fall or maintenance of protestantism. By the course of events, this republic was almost immediately involved in the most intricate windings of the general politics of Europe; nay it was so placed as gradually to give them a new direction. Under this most interesting point of view we shall consider it in the next division of our treatise; here we must be allowed to cast a glance upon the influence of the Reformation on its internal constitution.

[b] It is now six years since the emancipation of the catholics—thus spoken of by Prof. Heeren twenty-seven years before it took place—was resorted to as a preferable alternative to civil war. Had it been the free gift of the legislature, instead of being extorted by the threat of rebellion, the merits of the measure might have been more fairly tried. As it is, however, the catholics of Ireland appear to have forgotten the measure itself in their triumph at the mode in which it was obtained, and instead of developing, as our author hoped, the beneficial effects of the Union, the passing of the catholic relief bill is likely to prove the means of defeating it altogether. Tr.

The founders of this state had, at first, no thoughts of forming a republic. In fact, how could such a project have arisen in an age when there were no republican ideas abroad in Europe? Their views were of far narrower compass; they only sought the maintenance of their old rights and privileges, which were threatened by the despotism of Philip II., and especially by the introduction of the inquisition.

Fifteen years were thus allowed to elapse from the beginning of the disturbances in 1566, before the Netherlanders formally shook off their allegiance to Philip II. and put it beyond his power to end the quarrel by concession. Even then, however, they had become so little accustomed to the idea of a republic, that they seemed to think it their immediate duty to look about them for a foreign master, requiring only that he should respect their ancient rights and privileges. First they applied to France, then to England—and it was only when Francis of Alençon had clearly proved his incapacity for such an office, and Elizabeth had on grounds of higher policy declined it, that they became republicans—merely because they had no other resource. Their old notions, however, appear still to have been their only guides; and in pursuance of them they established that shapeless confederacy, in which they did not themselves clearly know who was the sovereign. The maintenance of the rights of the states in the several provinces was considered the most important object to be attained;

the central government formed itself as circumstances allowed or required; and the republic would have gained but little firmness from it, if amidst many and great deficiencies it had not possessed the one advantage of allowing free scope to the individual activity and genius of her great men.

In such a state of things, the reformed religion, although it was the main cause of the insurrection, and, when established as the national mode of worship, the foundation of the republic, could exercise no direct influence upon its further organization. But as the whole existence of this state was grounded on the Reformation, and as it was to religious enthusiasm that its citizens owed their heroic spirit, we must not be astonished that the bigotry of protestantism was nowhere else carried so far, or so deeply rooted as here. The consequence of this was, that the protestant clergy had much more easy access to the springs of public opinion in this than in any other country; and thus acquired the means of exercising a considerable influence upon the affairs of the state;—an influence of which the history of the republic affords but too many traces. The twelve years' truce of 1609 had no sooner afforded a short period of repose, than the clergy were busy in lighting up the flames of party violence; and arminians and gomarists persecuted each other with the same animosity as the protestants and catholics had in former times displayed. It is well known

by what ties these religious differences became connected with politics, and thus produced the first and bloody struggle between the party of the states and the orangists. No sooner was it apparent that the doctrines of Arminius found their chief supporters in the higher and more educated classes, and among the members of the states, than Maurice of Orange declared himself for the opposite and orthodox party, and at the head of the majority of the nation dared to bring Oldenbarneveld to the block (1619).

Although it was religion, however, which gave a pretext to the parties for a commencement of the feud, with which the subsequent history of this state is almost exclusively concerned, the true cause must be sought elsewhere. It lay in the very groundwork of their constitution, and it is only by a full explanation of this—a task beyond our limits—that it can be clearly pointed out.

SWEDEN.

In the four kingdoms which, as long as Poland existed, formed the north of Europe, the political consequences of the Reformation displayed themselves in a very different manner. The most remote of these, by its situation, its religion, and, more than all, by the barbarous condition in which it was, lay beyond the influence of the storm. Of the other three, one owed its existence and its greatness—although transient—to

the Reformation—another, its prosperity and its constitution—the third, dates its downfall from the same source. And thus we see that in the moral as in the physical world, what is deadly poison to one often proves the means of saving life in another!

At precisely this epoch, while the Reformation was spreading in Germany with a rapidity which nothing could check, the north of Europe had arrived at the political crisis which determined its future fate. The Union of Calmar, the parent of so much discord and warfare, was dissolved; and Gustavus Vasa restored (1521) the throne of Sweden to its former independence. But notwithstanding his courage and the progress which he made, and in spite of the favourable position in which he was placed by the insurrection in Denmark and the expulsion of his rival king, Christian II., he yet found himself in a situation which secured to him rather the name than the power of a king. It cannot be denied, however, that Gustavus Vasa ranks among the greatest princes of all ages. He was not simply acquainted with the common turns of policy by which mere intriguers attain their end; but rising, as great men are wont to do, beyond the age in which he lived, he seems to have embraced ideas of public economy which may well excite our admiration, since, as they were then unknown to the rest of the world, they must have been the product of his own acuteness and ability. Even Gustavus Vasa,

however, would scarce have found the resources with which his genius furnished him sufficient, had not the Reformation brought others to his assistance, upon which the foundations of his greatness may, in fact, be said to have rested. What, in truth, could the most talented prince have effected on a throne the income of which did not supply a third part of its necessary expenditure, and in a country where a powerful nobility stood side by side, with a still more powerful body of clergy, whose possessions had swallowed up the lands of the crown and which was likely to find that a *native* sovereign would not prove the best instrument for securing and extending its usurpations? Under such circumstances, a mind of even moderate capacity would have perceived that the Reformation afforded the best means of securing the stability of the government; but the difficulty in this, as in all other cases, lay in the execution; and here it was that the superior genius of Gustavus displayed itself. Too weak in himself, he succeeded in gaining over the nobility by the prospect of large acquisitions from the forfeited estates of the clergy; and with this support he was enabled to meet the decisive crisis which was brought on at the diet of Westeräs (1527), and which terminated in the submission of the clergy and the resignation of their estates into the hands of the king, to be disposed of as he thought fit. Conspiracies and tumults, set afoot in distant parts of the kingdom, remained the

only, and impotent means, by which they sought to avenge themslves.

Thus the Reformation also established a new order of things in Sweden, though without taking from the clergy their rights as an estate of the realm; and exercised a decisive influence upon the fate of this kingdom, and through it upon that of the north, and even for a considerable time upon Europe in general. There now wanted only the hereditary succession of the crown, which Gustavus Vasa likewise introduced, to put means at the disposal of the kings of Sweden, by which they might attain to a *supremacy of the North*, which would in turn affect the rest of Europe. The Reformation, while it made them masters in the north, opened the way to them, as its champions, of acquiring the *supremacy of Europe*. Supported by their own genius, they played this exaggerated part for a longer time than the state of their resources would have led us to expect. The consequences, which resulted from this, will be more fully developed in the part of our work which treats of the influence of the Reformation upon the political balance of Europe.

DENMARK.

THE internal condition of Denmark bore, at this period, a great resemblance to that of Sweden. The nobles and priests were here also the ruling party, and gave to what was then an electoral

kingdom, more the appearance of an aristocracy than of a monarchy. The dissolution of the Union of Calmar, and the restoration of the Swedish throne, although considered as losses by Denmark, were yet, as soon as the possession of Norway was secured to it, perhaps as great advantages to this country as to Sweden itself.

The kings of Denmark had hitherto exhausted themselves in struggles, for the most part fruitless, to secure their dominion over Sweden; and the disadvantages of these wars were naturally, on that account, much greater to Denmark than to Sweden. By the dissolution of the Union of Calmar, the former was restrained within its true sphere; and after a few ineffectual attempts to extend itself beyond this, it was taught to prize that golden mediocrity, the maintenance of which has ever since proved the palladium of Danish prosperity.

The Reformation acquired its political importance in Denmark nearly in the same way as in Sweden. It was introduced very early, and by the confiscation of the estates of the clergy, gave the first opportunity of extending the power of the crown. But although Christian III. accomplished this important object, the aristocracy was much less broken down in Denmark by the propagation of the new doctrines than it had been in Sweden, because it was here accomplished without the aid of a revolution. Moreover, the king was not only obliged to divide the estates of the clergy with the nobility, but to share them

very unequally. He received for his share, only the lesser half, the demesnes of the bishops; and even from this a considerable portion was deducted for the purpose of pious foundations. The project of converting the electoral into an hereditary succession was not in those days to be for a moment entertained; on the contrary, every change of government produced the exaction of harder conditions from the king. Denmark remained, therefore, even by its constitution, much behind Sweden. That which was rapidly effected in Sweden by a revolution, was slowly prepared here by the spirit of the times.

It required the enterprising reign of Christian IV., and the decisive superiority of the middle orders over the nobility, to obtain the adoption of that constitution which Frederic III. (1660) introduced, under a rare combination of fortunate circumstances, and with still rarer success in the result. The only fundamental articles of it, were the hereditary succession of the crown, and the maintenance of the Lutheran religion as that of the state.

POLAND.

THE difference between the language of Poland and that of the other countries of western Europe, appeared to offer an obstacle to the progress of the Reformation, which could not easily be overcome. The Latin language, how-

ever, then almost universally adopted in writing, assisted the Reformation in this, as it did in many other difficulties; and, during the latter half of the fifteenth century, although somewhat later than in the other countries which we have mentioned, the new doctrines made steady and even bold advances here. Besides the evangelical communion, another, viz. that of the Socinians, was formally established in Poland, which, although it proceeded from the former, was not acknowledged by it, and was not openly tolerated even in Germany. The majority of the nation thus separated itself, under the common title of dissenters, from the ancient church, which was not, however, thereby deprived of its political rights, in the undisputed possession and exercise of which it was allowed for a considerable time to remain.

We might perhaps expect to find, that the introduction of this new body of ideas had assisted the march of national improvement, and that the rather, because the difference of opinion between the socinians and the other evangelists, appeared to call for the exercise of faculties, which would naturally tend to the enlargement of the mind. But as the new sects here neither were, nor had, in the beginning, any occasion to become, political parties, they were wanting in that principle of activity which gave them life elsewhere: and the Reformation stood for nothing more in Poland, than a change of some few abstract doctrines, which might be amply

debated upon without making the debaters either wiser or more enlightened. There was here therefore a total absence of that wholesome ferment which the Reformation caused in other countries; and which, finally, after the grosser parts had been worked off, produced an aggregate of pure truths and enlarged views. The great body of the people was thus much less enlightened by the Reformation in Poland than elsewhere; and it was on that account a very dangerous gift. The two parties hated while they tolerated each other; and there only wanted a spark to set men's passion on fire, and kindle such a flame as could be extinguished only under the ruins of the state.

This spark fell amongst them when Charles XII., a monarch of the *Lutheran* persuasion, invaded Poland as a conqueror, and formed a party in the country for the advancement of his own ambitious designs. Although this faction consisted in a small part only of dissenters, it was sufficient that any of them supported it, to make their opponents consider the name of dissenter synonymous with that of a partizan of Sweden; and the more confined their views, the more violent became the mutual hatred of the parties, which naturally pressed with greater force upon the supporters of Charles XII., as soon as he became incapable of defending them.

After the diet in the year 1717, when the dissenters were first subjected to a spoliation of their public rights, the precedent was never left

unemployed, even when there could be no longer question of a Swedish party in the state. The oppression of the dissenters now became a political maxim; and, under the skilful direction of the jesuits, it was pursued so far as to leave them nothing besides the memory of their former advantages, except fruitless petitions and complaints.

Thus the storm was prepared here only after it had subsided in other quarters; and the consequences were easily to be foreseen. In a country, the constitution and internal feuds of which had for a long time opened the way to foreign interference, these religious contests could not fail to be of fatal effect as soon as any neighbouring power learnt how to employ them. Catharine II. soon perceived the advantages which she might derive from them; and under the pretext of *protecting the dissenters* laid the foundation (1766) of the Russian power in Poland.

Shall I describe the further series of events, the consecutive scenes of that national tragedy? Shall I recall the madness of the civil war, the insolence of the oppressor, the violation of the rights of the people, the persecutions, such as no nation has endured since the fall of Carthage? The cabinets of Europe have already too sore a testimony against them, in the cries of the victim which they offered up in Prague as a sacrifice to their unhallowed policy.

The reader will rather turn his eyes in sorrow

from that desolating scene, and let them rest upon the cheering prospect which is presented by the restoration, even though partial, of this shattered state, and its establishment under a better constitution.

THE OTHER COUNTRIES OF EUROPE.

THE countries which we have hitherto mentioned complete the sphere over which the revolution of the sixteenth century extended its influence. Bursting forth in Germany, the central point of Europe, it shook all around it with the violence of an earthquake. Still, however, there were countries in this quarter of the world in which its impulse could not be felt; and it is the more interesting to examine these, because the Reformation, if not positively important, was negatively so to several of them.

While Russia, for the reasons which we have stated above, was uninfluenced by it in the east of Europe, Spain and Portugal were equally so in the west, and Italy in the south. The geographical situation of these countries will not afford a sufficient explanation of this phenomenon; mountains and plains are no barriers to the progress of opinion.

It is true, the strict vigilance of the Spanish government made it difficult for the new doctrines to gain admittance there; but in Italy the inquisition held out no such terrors as in Spain; and who, moreover, will, in these days, doubt

that all the bulwarks of spiritual and worldly policy are too feeble to restrain the current of ideas? The causes of it lie deeper, and can only be explained by the individual characters of these nations. The old religion was one evidently designed rather for the feelings than the reason of its followers; the new, while it rested everything upon a change in doctrinal points, and withdrew all that might affect the senses from its form of worship, appealed for its influence to the understanding, and despoiled both fancy and feeling almost wholly of their idols. It was suited to the north, but not the south. The calm and investigating spirit of the German nations found in it the nourishment which it required and sought for; and hence the geographical limits of these, from the coasts of Scotland and Norway to the Helvetian Alps, formed in their chief extent the limits of the Reformation. The more vivid imagination and sensitive feelings of the people of the south, especially of the softer sex, found little to please them in its tenets. Who would seek to deprive the women of Spain and Italy of their Madonna and their saints? The attempt would be a vain one, or, if successful, with these accessories of religion, their consolation and their peace would vanish also:

> Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise [c].

[c] (Ein wahn der uns beglückt
Ist eine wahrheit werth, die uns zu boden drückt.)

It was not, therefore, owing to the prohibitions of the government, but to the character of the nations themselves, that the Reformation found no support among them. Whether this was their gain or their loss can hardly now be a question. By their almost total exclusion from that great ferment of ideas, which in other countries of civilised Europe gave activity and life to the human intellect, they were thrown behind the general progress of this quarter of the world; and thus, while the example of Poland affords from amidst its ruins, a warning that patriotism and the most heroic spirit are but feeble supports to a nation, unless guided by national improvement, these countries teach the not less important truth, that it may not in the end prove so advantageous to a state to have escaped the storms of a revolution, as those who are the witnesses of it commonly believe.

SECOND PART.

Development of the Influence of the Reformation upon the General Politics of Europe.

The view which we have presented of the influence exercised by the Reformation upon the individual condition and constitution of nearly all the countries of Europe, will assist us in the more general consideration of its effects upon the *politics of Europe as a body.*

The interests which it called into life continued for a century and a half to act as the mainspring of European politics; and when, in the age of Lewis XIV. these gave way to others—those of commerce—their impulse was weakened only by degrees, and carried its operations even into the eighteenth century.

I propose to consider this extensive subject, in its main features at least, under three points of view. 1st. As to the organisation of society in general. 2ndly. With regard to the political balance or mutual relations of the states. 3rdly. As to commerce and the colonial system.

I. *The effects of the Reformation upon the organisation of society.*

It is impossible that an event of such great practical importance as the Reformation should have taken place without causing considerable changes in the constitution of civil society. The fall of the papal hierarchy was of itself sufficient for this in the countries which adopted the new doctrines. But there were other, and more distant consequences, which were at first perhaps beyond the reach of calculation.

The *first* and almost inevitable effect of the Reformation upon civil society in general, was, that *Religion became a part of the constitutional basis of all governments.* In the middle ages the catholic religion was universally dominant, but the constitution was nowhere expressly founded upon it; there was nowhere a direct law that it should be the religion of the state; that its rulers should acknowledge no other. Although dissenters were not tolerated, and heretics, as they were termed, were persecuted, this was no immediate affair of the state, but of the church and its superior; if the state concerned itself in it, as in the case of the Waldenses in France, it was only at the desire of the latter. But when by the Reformation the interests of politics and religion became mutually involved, this condition of things was altered.

In the countries which had embraced protestantism, the new religion was almost universally de-

clared to be that of the state; not only were its professors alone allowed the free exercise of their rites, but many offices unconnected with religion, as well as the right of sitting in the assemblies of the nation, were confined to them; in many it was made a necessary condition of accession to the throne.

The same thing took place in the catholic states; and wherever the question was doubtful it was formally determined by treaties and articles of peace, which were often dearly purchased.

It is true that the Christian religion is, by its doctrines, totally unconnected with politics. It merely inculcates submission to existing authority, and decides nothing, as to the constitution of states, with preference of any particular form. Nor did any of the parties into which its advocates were separated by the Reformation, introduce the subject into their doctrinal canons; and although the more democratical church government of the Lutherans, and especially of the stricter sects, appeared to be favourable to republicanism, this had no necessary connection with the affairs of the state, nor could have, except under temporary circumstances.

Experience has, in fact, abundantly shown, that the most absolute monarchy, as well as the freest republic, are alike compatible either with catholicism or protestantism. The more unphilosophical, therefore, must that policy appear which required that one or other of these

should form the basis of government, and thus breathed a spirit of intolerance into the nations of Europe, for which they have been obliged, even in our days, dearly to atone. Although heretics were no longer brought to the stake, was it not sufficiently degrading to be reduced into an inferior caste by the mere tenure of a few opinions? Was it not in the eye of reason more than strange that a man might or might not hold the lowest constable's office, in this place or that, according as he believed, or disbelieved, the doctrine of transubstantiation? An impartial observer, however, will attach less blame to those who established such institutions, than to those who allowed them to continue without any necessity. It is easy to perceive, that at the time of their origin they were the result of unavoidable circumstances. As soon, and as long as religious parties combine a political character with their other and more peculiar one, it is under this character that the state must contemplate them; and the exclusion of religious dissenters, if not from the state altogether, at least from all active share in its administration, may be a requisite security. But what was absolutely necessary at one time does not continue so for ever; and we might therefore expect that the severity of these laws should have been gradually diminished, even though there might have been some hesitation in doing them away at once and altogether.

And yet it needed a new revolution to induce the adoption of these views by several of the first nations of Eúrope, and among them, by our own. And will any one acquainted with the progress of events expect that even now this example will be followed by all; even the *new* constitution of Spain strictly forbids the exercise of every form of worship except the catholic. There certainly exists no truth more simple, than, that every one is justly entitled to adore his God after his own manner; and, that the state requires a religion, but not that it should be established as that of the state[d]. The simplest truths, however, are those of which men are in general least easily convinced, because they are usually opposed to prejudices, and still more because they clash with interests. But obstinately to refuse conviction even after they have become the prevalent ideas of the day, can be termed nothing else than to begin a contest with the spirit of the age, the issue of which will in all probability be fatal.

A *second* and not less general political consequence of the Reformation was, *The extension and increase of the power of the princes of Europe.*

We include this among the most general con-

[d] It is here that the real question arises.—If the state requires a religion can this be better secured than by an established church? Professor Heeren seems to think that it can, but he has here treated the subject too vaguely to admit of our judging upon what grounds his opinion is formed. Tr.

sequences, because it displayed itself not only in those countries which adopted, but also in those which rejected, the protestant doctrines.

In the former this increase of power was derived from several sources. In the first place, the revenues of the princes were undoubtedly augmented by the confiscation of church property. But, with the exception of Sweden, this augmentation could hardly exercise any considerable influence upon the great states of Europe. This was partly owing to the character of the princes themselves; and partly to the absence of all those general ideas on political economy by which it might have been turned to advantage. Henry VIII., who was the chief gainer, dissipated his large revenues without aim or method. In Denmark the kings were obliged to resign the better portion to their nobility; and the majority of the German princes were noble minded enough to apply the forfeited property of the church to the foundation of useful establishments, especially of those for public education.

The fall of the hierarchy, however, was of itself sufficient to make way for an increase of power in the princes. From this time forth no exemptions could be claimed, no papal or episcopal jurisdiction exercised within their dominions, unless by their permission. Foreign interference, which had been so especially formidable to the weaker princes, now ceased altogether, and they were left sole masters over

their own people. But the chief cause of their increase of power lay still deeper, and was common alike to the catholic and the protestant princes. The increased activity which the religious and political interests of the Reformation had called forth, necessarily tended to enlarge their sphere of action, even though there was no express provision to that effect introduced into the constitution. The influence of the Reformation in this respect upon the German princes, and upon the empire, has been noticed above. No previous sovereign of England had possessed such absolute power as Elizabeth; we have seen that the autocracy of the French monarchs was grounded upon the fall of the Hugonots; while the national freedom of Spain may be fairly said to have owed its ruin to the continual wars in which its kings were engaged, as defenders of the ancient faith, and to the *royal* inquisition which they established.

In this way the Reformation created a new order of things in Europe. Its princes, by becoming masters of their own dominions, through the cessation of the feuds in which they had previously been engaged, found themselves in a situation to extend their views to other countries, and upon this foundation the subsequent structure of European politics was raised.

A *third* change, of great importance to the condition of civil society, was brought about, in the protestant states at least, by the *altered position of the clergy*. It is true, that even in these

countries they had by no means wholly lost their political influence. The Reformation being in its fundamental character a *doctrinal* revolution, and the first question, in the half political, half theological, disputes to which it gave rise, being as to the admission or rejection of particular articles of belief, the divines became indispensable to the princes, and were frequently adopted as their counsellors, and even ministers, although with no direct title as such. It requires but a slight acquaintance with the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to be aware of the pernicious consequences which resulted, in many instances, from the blind enthusiasm of these zealots, who were too frequently wont to consult their passions in the counsels which they gave. Still, however, an impartial judge will not deny that, on the whole, the clergy were brought nearer to their proper character of teachers of the people, by the Reformation; and even in catholic states it can hardly now be doubted, that by the expulsion of the spiritual orders, especially of that of the mendicant-friars, a very considerable evil was removed.

It is true that another order took the place of these immediately on their destruction, which like the growth of the ivy upon the oak, gradually wound itself round almost every branch of the European system, and was even powerful enough to bend many of them to its purpose; the society of the *Jesuits*, however, although it might not have arisen had the Reformation not

taken place, yet owed its first progress to the missions in which it was concerned. Any attempt to point out the advantage which it afterwards derived from these, would be as vain as the expectation of those who believe that with the restoration of the order its former influence would be restored. The great law of the material world—that "bodies once moved do not return to the same place under the same conditions"—is equally binding upon the political. But, besides these, there were other effects of the Reformation upon society, which although more distant were also far more important; their visible connection with religion being, however, slight, it must be judged of only by the results.

As it was the Reformation which first breathed a spirit of activity into men's minds, it was natural that this should be directed to subjects in immediate connection with it, and religion thus became the favourite topic of debate. But as with activity a feeling of independence and a fondness for enquiry were also produced, the powers which had been called into existence were soon engaged upon other pursuits; the horizon had been expanded in every direction; and amidst the freedom of opinion thus created, whatever bore upon civil society, its constitution, and perfection, became the subject of universal attention. In this, protestantism was undeniably far advanced beyond catholicism.

The great question, as to the relations in

which the government and the people should stand to each other, received its first practical answer in the protestant countries of Europe; and amidst all the modifications which the forms of their constitutions assumed, it was in them for the first time plainly perceived that the interests of the rulers and the subjects are one and the same. Up to the Reformation these had been formally distinct in all the great states of Europe; the people appeared to exist only that they might furnish taxes; the government that it might indulge its caprices; even the internal policy of Lewis XII., although justly appreciated, was directed rather by his heart than his head, and remained in those times without imitators. But the Reformation, by restoring the freedom of men's minds, imparted to them a loftier character; and laid the foundations of that nobler political freedom, which may be as perfectly coexistent with the most absolute monarchy as with a republic; because it depends not upon the form of the constitution, but upon the spirit of the government and of the nation. The rejection of the maxim, that the people were to be considered merely as instruments, and the open acknowledgment on the part of the chief protestant princes, that they enjoyed their dignity solely for the advantage of the people, gave rise to that more perfect system of political economy, by which, as a general feature, the majority of the protestant states have been distinguished above the catholic.

However absurd it would be to attempt to point out in the protestant religion, the causes of the erection of such governments as those of Great Britain and of Prussia, it is equally certain that, without protestantism, such constitutions and such modes of administration could never have been formed. To it, in fact, belong the first vigorous exertions of which the human intellect became capable, when it had shaken off the fetters which had so long crippled and restrained it. It is true, that these examples were not lost upon several of the catholic states; but we may fairly say, that, when they discovered the need they had of such institutions, they resorted to their protestant neighbours as possessing the models which they should imitate. Did not the immortal Colbert form his views upon the policy which he saw pursued in the Netherlands? Did not Joseph II. aim at rivalling the example set before him by Frederick the Great? Was not the progress of civil society among the small states of protestant Germany far beyond that of catholic Italy? Was there, before the time of Leopold II.,—who, by his institutions in Tuscany, opened a path which the character of the nation has prevented it from pursuing,—was there, I say, a single state in Italy of which it could be said, that its mode of government had become sensibly improved? It is in vain to seek an explanation of these phenomena in chance or in the character of the princes. The means of acquiring knowledge and experience

were too ample, the succession of princes too long, to allow of such solutions of the problem.

It was protestantism which, although slowly, yet surely, shed these blessings over the human race. And if Great Britain has prevented the love of constitutional liberty from becoming wholly extinct; and, by its victory over the adverse elements of society, has become the model upon which, with certain varieties, the states of the continent are at this moment forming their governments, has not all this been produced by the same cause? Would Spain, even that Spain which most rigidly excludes protestantism, ever have received her new constitution without it? And would not this very constitution have been, in all human probability, more usefully and excellently framed, had the light of protestantism shone down undimmed upon her people?

II. *Effects of the Reformation upon the mutual relations of the States of Europe.*

All other changes which the Reformation may have produced in the social condition of the nations of Europe, have reference to the extension of their ideas, and are, therefore, beyond the limits of this treatise. We proceed, then, to the examination of our second question: viz. In what manner did it acquire an influence upon the mutual relations of the states of Europe; or, in other words, upon the system of a political balance of power?

As this influence, however, was not always of

the same importance, nor of the same kind, it is requisite to a clear view of the subject, that we should divide it into several periods. And we shall hereafter see, that, in almost every case, the middle and the end of the century afford data for our division; not merely in point of time, but according to distinctions in the subject itself. We shall thus have *five* periods, of which the first will embrace the times of Charles V. and Francis I., or the first half of the sixteenth century;—the second, those of Philip II. and Elizabeth; or the latter half of the same century;—the third, those of Richelieu and Gustavus Adolphus, being that of the thirty years' war, or the first half of the seventeenth;—the fourth, those of Louis XIV. and William III., or the second half of that century;—while the last, in which there is no need of accurate division, will take in the eighteenth century generally.

FIRST PERIOD, 1517—1556.

After the commencement of the sixteenth century, the states of Europe, by interweaving their interests, and by the alliances and counter-alliances which were thus caused, formed a *political system* in a much higher sense of the word than had been the case during the middle ages. The increase of civilisation, by creating so many new sources of excitement, necessarily causes a greater complication of relations among the states which it affects, and is of itself sufficient to produce that

character of unity, which gives an interest to the history of modern Europe. In an aggregate of states, too, such as the European, the *principle of a balance of power* became the more speedily developed, on account of the great differences of strength which existed amongst them. It was the immediate interest of all to prevent any single state from acquiring such a pre-eminence as would enable it to prescribe laws to the rest; and in such a case the more unequal the power of the individual members, the more frequent are the alliances; and, consequently, the more complicated and firmer the mutual connection of the states. In a system of this kind, the most powerful is taught, that the oppression or annihilation of a weaker state, but one which it finds an useful ally, is far from being a matter of indifference; and thus states of the second, or even of the third order, become elevated to a degree of political importance which they could not otherwise attain; and which is the security upon which their very existence depends. Mere selfishness must thus yield to policy; and since the most gifted men of our own times have recognised the necessity of restoring, as far as possible, the shattered edifice which the storms of the revolution shook to the earth, the author who treats of it can hardly venture to doubt that it is the only one worthy of an enlightened age.

The Reformation, for a considerable time, exercised the principal influence upon the workings of this system, although it cannot be said to have

been the original cause of its existence. The idea of a balance of power was spread over Europe, with other political notions, by the Italians, among whose states—perfectly independent as they were up to the end of the fifteenth century —it had been planted, watched over, and brought to maturity, and then again suffered to decay and become useless; but the almost incredible vacillation, which the general policy of the first fifteen years of the sixteenth century shows to have prevailed, is an evidence that the science was as yet without sure foundations, and that the main principles of the practical politics of Europe were still undetermined. The history of no other era presents such a web of projects and counter projects; of alliances and counter alliances; but it is not improbable that this very abundance was a token that the want of more secure principles was felt, while these were the only remedies which could be applied; and thus the political system of that day may be likened to an unwieldy mass whose centre of gravity has not yet been ascertained. The sudden rise of the house of Hapsburg, by the union of the imperial throne and the most important Austrian possessions, with the Spanish monarchy, put an end to this vacillation. The character which France was destined to support in the general scheme of European politics, was now at once determined; the rivalry of Francis I. and Charles V. laid the foundation stone of the system of the balance of power; while the policy of Henry

VIII., whose vanity was busied with the idea that he should be able to decide the strife between the rivals, and the much more permanently important alliance made by Francis I., as early as 1530, with the Porte, gave it an extent which embraced Europe from one end to the other. Thus the emualtion of the two chief powers of the continent lent the first impulse to general politics, and has continued to influence them, although with occasional interruptions of its force.

Down to the middle of the sixteenth century, the Reformation cannot be said to have interfered materially in determining the relative position of these great powers, or in advancing the political system of which we speak. The ineffectual efforts of Francis I. to draw the members of the league of Smalcald over to his interest, hardly deserve to be noticed. But still, as even during that period the Reformation, in a certain degree, founded two new powers—Sweden and Prussia—which were destined afterwards to rank among the most important members of the European body of states, it thus prepared the way for a future development of the system. The new life which it breathed into the German empire was of much more immediate importance: for as the protestant princes were obliged to unite in opposition to the emperor and his supporters, a political balance was established, which, as we have before said, remained for a long time the principle of life upon which that body de-

pended, while it exercised a most decisive influence upon the political system of Europe in general. Statesmen of enlightened views soon came to the conclusion, that the disturbance of the balance of power in Germany by the suppression of the protestant party, would afford the house of Austria an opportunity of acquiring the supremacy in that country, and thus entail the disturbance of the political balance of Europe itself; this is amply proved by the share taken by Sweden and France in the thirty years' war, and, at a still earlier period, by the alliance between Henry II. and Maurice of Saxony.

The reason why the Reformation did not, and could not, acquire any immediate influence over the politics of Europe was evidently this, that neither of the great powers before-mentioned espoused its cause. Had Francis I. allowed it a free entrance into France, had the protestant doctrines become prevalent in that kingdom, then the limits of the religious differences throughout Europe would have decided those of the political. But as this was not the case, the rivalry between France and the house of Hapsburg afforded the Reformation no opportunity of acquiring influence from the struggle. In order to make it the mainspring of European politics other circumstances were necessary; and these the latter half of the sixteenth century produced. These may be easily seen in the *Revolution of the Netherlands,* and the *Introduction of a new Rule of Faith into England.* Both of these,

however, as well in point of time as of their reaction upon the rest of Europe, are so closely connected that they do not admit of a separate consideration.

SECOND PERIOD, 1556—1603.

No other event of this period acquired so rapid, so great, and at the same time so durable, an influence upon the general politics of Europe, as the Revolution of the United Netherlands.

Its origin may be reckoned among the consequences of the Reformation.

The limited abilities of Philip II. would not allow of his raising himself above the prejudices of his education and his age; his pride and tyranny would not be satisfied with the use of any but violent means; while his unwearied activity served only to fan the flame which it sought to extinguish.

Thus he was himself the founder of the new republic, and here, as elsewhere, freedom was the child of despotism.

From the very first this revolution acquired, not merely a political tendency, but one which was directed towards the general politics of Europe. The insurgents had to sustain a contest with one of the first powers of Europe; and although an impartial historian cannot deny them the credit of having made good their own cause by their own strength, yet they were themselves very far from being convinced of the possibility

of so doing, and believed themselves obliged to look around for assistance from without. By their dealings with France and England—and in neither case were these dealings without results, (though more effectual in the latter than in the former)—the interests of the scarce-formed republic became interwoven with those of the chief powers of Europe; and born, like Minerva, with arms in its hand, like Minerva, too, it at once took its seat in the council of the gods.

By the intervention of foreign powers in the Netherlands, a new political system was formed in the west of Europe. Had not France been occupied by its religious wars at home, which made it impossible for her kings, of themselves too weak, to take any effectual share in the disputes of other states, she would have found no difficulty in uniting the new republic with herself by secure ties; as this, however, was not done, Elizabeth reaped the advantage of the situation in which her neighbours were placed.

As she had herself restored the protestant religion in England; and had founded her power upon its maintenance, her interests accorded with those of the Netherlands on this important point; and an alliance between the two states might, under these circumstances, be naturally expected. But however much we may admire the prudence and moderation which Elizabeth displayed in this most brilliant portion of her reign, it was yet impossible for her fully to determine the ultimate consequences of her acts.

As the most powerful of the protestant princes of Europe, she was universally considered the champion of that religion; while Philip II. was, on the other hand, acknowledged as the defender of the catholic faith. Thus religion and politics became more closely united, and the doctrine, that catholicism was a support of absolute power, while protestantism favoured the freedom of the people, although but partially true and not formally acknowledged, became gradually developed, and was adopted as the favourite maxim of more than one cabinet; nay, finally, cost the Stuarts their throne. The former of the two propositions it would be difficult to prove, while the latter is true only inasmuch as a protestant party under a catholic government, might, by oppression, be rendered rebellious, and thus become dangerous to it.

Thus, in the last half of the sixteenth century, the political system of Europe assumed a different form from that which distinguished it in the first. France and Austria were then the chief states of Europe, and the balance of power depended upon their emulation; but as France was now occupied with its own internal dissensions, and Austria, its strength much diminished by the separation from Spain, was kept inactive by the incapacity of Rudolf II., Spain and England stepped forward in their stead. In the rivalry between the two former powers, religion had little to do; in that of the latter, religion and politics were inseparably united. In the

one case, every thing depended upon the forces by land; in the other, the navy was of great importance, the army of hardly any: while from the defeat of the invincible armada, Europe dates the use of the term "Naval Powers", which, till then, the science of politics either did not admit at all, or understood but partially.

Such were the elements of the new system of which the republic of the Netherlands became every year a more distinguished constituent. It soon attained to a separation from Spain, though such an act was far from its original design; and quickly reached a degree of importance which rendered the assistance of any foreign power superfluous. But the path of fame upon which it entered was new to the ambition of Europe, whose nations gazed in wonder upon the goal to which it led. Even while its existence as a state was yet uncertain, this upstart power grasped the whole commerce of the world as its portion, and thus supplied itself with resources for a struggle which was longer and more desperate than that of Greece with Persia.

Thus, in the midst of the monarchies of Europe, arose a republic which first presented this quarter of the globe with the example of a commercial state supported by naval power; and if, as we have shown, its rise may be attributed to the Reformation, to the Reformation also belongs the principle of life which commerce served to breathe into politics, after the direct influence of religion had expired.

THIRD PERIOD, 1603—1648.

In the first half of the seventeenth century the system of a balance of power in Europe was both altered and extended; the influence of the Reformation, however, far from being diminished during that period, showed itself in its greatest force. The death of Philip II. (1598), and of Elizabeth (1603), put an end to the rivalry of Spain and England, which had, in fact, been mainly founded upon the personal dislike which these crowned heads entertained towards each other; and England, falling into the indolent hands of James I., was soon in a situation which precluded any effectual participation in the affairs of other countries; while amidst the troubles which attended the reign of his unfortunate son, it was totally shut out from them.

On the other hand, France had recovered her internal security since the accession of the Bourbons: and the judicious government of Henry IV. and Sully, had in a wonderfully short time healed up the wounds inflicted by the civil war. France then resumed her proper station in the political system of Europe; her old jealousy of the Spanish-Austrian house revived of itself; but in the schemes of Henry IV. it was considered only as the means to an end, only as the foundation of a new system by which Europe was to be remodelled.

It is needless to dwell upon the celebrated project of an European republic; the prosecution of which would either have wholly spared this quarter of the world a war of thirty years, or, which is more probable, have accelerated its commencement. With the death of its author (1610) not only did this scheme pass away, but instead of rivalry with Spain a friendly connection was established; and France, falling a prey to the petty factions of the court, sank back into a state of weakness and vacillation, which ended only when Richelieu (1624) laid his firm grasp upon the helm of state.

But though the murder of Henry IV. prevented France from taking the first part in the great tragedy of which Europe was to be the stage, it yet delayed, although it could not wholly avert, the tragedy itself. The scene of it was already chosen, and as Germany during the *thirty years' war* obtained this melancholy preference, its fate became connected with the destinies of Europe.

The general point of view from which the origin of this war must be considered, has been given above. After the religious peace of Augsburg—a peace *far too easily* obtained—the maintenance of a balance between the two parties had become the constant object of German politics. But, if we throw a glance over the internal affairs of the empire, from the date of that peace till the commencement of the great war, (1556—1618,) we shall see, at once, how feebly order

was maintained. Among the articles of the peace itself, the *reservatum ecclesiasticum*[a], which the protestants did not acknowledge, had laid a train to light up future wars. But, besides this, there were ample opportunities for mutual complaint; the old party could, with difficulty, bring itself to consider the new as possessed of equal rights with its own; and, without tracing the proofs of it historically, we may feel morally convinced that the protestants were usually wronged. Hence religious grievances formed a standing article of discussion in the diets of the time; and, had not the Turkish war occasionally compelled a temporary union, and directed public attention to other matters, peace could hardly have been so long maintained. The personal qualities of Ferdinand I., and still more those of his worthy successor, Maximilian II., were of great effect in preserving quiet for a time; but under the protracted and sluggish reign of Rudolph II., the materials of discontent accumulated so rapidly that the two parties stood, even then, in arms against each other. In 1608 the *protestant union* was formed, which caused, in turn, the organisation of the *catholic league.*

In the mean time, however, the protestant party was so unfortunate, as to be divided against

[a] The reservatum ecclesiasticum respected the question, Whether the future freedom of religion should be extended only to the secular orders, or also to the ecclesiastical.—v. Heeren's Manual, vol. i. p. 73. Talboys, Oxford, 1834. Tr.

itself. The religious separation of the Lutherans from the Calvinists had had its political influence in Germany as elsewhere; and the jealousy, which existed between the electoral houses of Saxony and the Palatinate, especially after the latter had put itself at the head of the union, estranged the former from the common cause. If any balance of power, therefore, had before existed between the two parties, it was now at an end. But the greatest evil, by which the protestants were oppressed, was the want of a leader of sufficient power and ability to give firmness to their confederation; for without this the first active measures of a party lead to its own dissolution.

After the death of Maurice of Saxony, the protestants were not fortunate enough to reckon among their princes—certainly not among those who formed the union—a single man who joined the requisite talents with the requisite influence, even in a moderate degree, while the league was admirably provided with a leader in prince Maximilian of Bavaria.

Thus the elements of disorder were scattered, not only throughout Germany, but in other countries, and especially in the chief of those which constituted the Austrian monarchy; and when Ferdinand II., was named as successor to the throne (1617), it became evident from his known impatience of temper, that the crisis would be immediately brought on. No one could determine, however, where the first blow

would be struck;—as it chanced, this was in Bohemia—but the war would probably have been the same in all material points had it occurred elsewhere. The fire of dissension now spread with fearful rapidity, and wrapped half Europe in its flames, which, after raging thirty years, were only partially got under; their total extinction being delayed till eleven years later (1659).

Although anything like detail relative to this war is wholly beyond our present limits, we must yet trace out the chief epochs in it, that we may thus show the extensive changes in the political system of Europe, of which, by means of it, the Reformation became the cause.

We are by no means to imagine that the thirty years' war was, from beginning to end, conducted upon one plan, or even directed to one object. No one, in fact, could at its commencement, have anticipated either its duration or extent. The saying of Cato the elder, that, "war feeds itself," proved here, as elsewhere, unfortunately, too true. From time to time, and just as the flames appeared on the point of being extinguished, some new interest would be called into action and revive them with fresh fuel. Nevertheless, amidst all changes of affairs, and intermixture of political interests, religion formed the groundwork of the whole; and the thirty years' war must, therefore, in a general view, be considered as an effect of the Reformation.

In its origin, it was merely a civil war, con-

fined to the Austrian monarchy, and having for its object the subjection of the Bohemian insurgents. This object was fully attained by the battle of Prague; the war therefore might have appeared to be at an end. But the ease with which success had been obtained, led to new projects.

The conquered party in Bohemia was in connection with the protestants of the empire, and had chosen a king in the person of the unfortunate Frederic of the Palatinate, who was chief of the protestant union. This prince, deprived of his hereditary possessions, and under the ban of the empire, was now wandering as an exile, attended by two adventurers, and a handful of troops. His territory lay open for attack, and seemed to promise a secure booty. Not only his own incapacity, but also that of the other members of the union, had been so clearly proved, that it did not seem to require even another battle such as that of Prague, to annihilate the protestant party—especially as it had already been weak enough to allow itself to be disarmed without opposition.

It is probable, however, that the latter object may not have entered directly into the views of the emperor at that time; but the more it could be brought forward the greater was his temptation: and the more speedily he was opposed, the more confident became the opinion that the supremacy of Germany was at stake.

But about this time (1621) war broke out again in another country. After a twelve years'

truce between Spain and the Netherlands, Philip IV., although but lately come to the throne, began the contest afresh. And this new war almost necessarily fed, as it was in turn fed by, the troubles in Germany.

In this case, as in the other, religion was the cause of difference; while the houses of Spain and Austria, which had long been estranged, had at the accession of Ferdinand II. become again so closely united that the interests of the two were now the same. The war, then, was carried on here and in Germany at the same time: but with its change of object it had acquired a higher degree of importance—the subjection of Bohemia was a matter which touched Austria alone; that of Germany and the Netherlands was a subject of interest to all Europe.

The interference of foreign powers in the German war, was naturally to be expected under these circumstances—and France, above all, must have found in its ancient rivalry with Austria abundant reasons for preventing the superiority, which the conquest of Germany would have given to that power. But then, France, until the ministry of Richelieu (1624), was under a divided government, and guided by no steady system of policy; and even he was at first too much occupied with the internal affairs of the kingdom to take an active part. Still, however, he intrigued in the north of Europe: and it was he who animated Gustavus Adolphus to come forth as the avenger of the protestant

cause, after the battle of Lutter (1626), had checked the attempt of Christian IV. of Denmark to interfere in the affairs of Germany.

This first participation of the north of Europe in the interests of the south and west, formed an entirely new feature in the European system, and was as important in its consequences as it was new. Up to this time the northern powers had formed a system of their own, which, partly owing to the Polish and Swedish wars—these being also caused by religious interests, which had become mixed with family feuds—had for forty years been firmly kept together; between it and the rest of Europe, however, there had as yet been no permanent causes of contact.

These the Reformation produced; and *by its means was Europe for the first time framed into one political system*. At a time when it was deeply felt that the maintenance of the balance in Germany was extremely uncertain, the want of a northern power sufficiently formidable to oppose Austria became evident. This part Sweden undertook, and thus arose a new order of things in European politics.

There can be no doubt that Sweden was the state best qualified by its superior organisation, and especially by its possession of such valuable lands, as it in those days held, upon the Baltic or gulf of Finland, for the task which it undertook;—nor is this less certain because the sequel showed that the extraordinary abilities of its king were of more consequence than its internal

resources. The splendid career of Gustavus Adolphus ended early by his death at Lutzen; and yet late enough to secure to Sweden its influence in the affairs of Germany, and at the same time in those of Europe. Even the changes caused by the fortune of war, had little effect upon the position thus gained; especially when even Richelieu, after the defeat at Nordlingen (1634), ceased to be a mere spectator. From this time Sweden ranked among the first powers of Europe, and the famous treaty of Westphalia appeared to secure it in this place, by the important possessions in Germany which were by it assigned to the Swedes.

It has been often questioned whether Gustavus Adolphus, had he lived, would not have been fully as dangerous an enemy to the freedom of Germany as Austria was. The answer to this will be easy, if we suppose—what, in the case of such a prince, we surely may—viz. that he would have obeyed the dictates of sound policy. There was only one character by adhering to which Sweden could maintain itself in the superiority which it had attained—that of the head of the protestant party in Germany. As head of this party it had obtained the most decided influence over the affairs of Germany. As such it still stood forth as the state which opposed Austria. As such it was the natural ally of France—and, as such—a consequence of all these advantages—it maintained its rank among the first powers of Europe. If such a supremacy as this—which might doubt-

less be oppressive to more than one state of the German empire, since everything depended upon the mode in which it was exercised—if this, I say, is to be termed the annihilation of the freedom of Germany, it *must necessarily* have been included in the scheme of Gustavus Adolphus. But if he aimed at more than this, he himself marred the glorious character he had undertaken, and sought that which he could not long have held. The dominion of the weaker over the stronger, which temporary causes produce, may last for a while, but it is against nature that it should be of long duration. It was impossible that Germany should have been reduced into a province by Sweden.

The peace of Westphalia put an end to both the German war, and that in the Netherlands. This peace was prized more than any ever was before, and that often beyond its deserts. It caused, undoubtedly, *three* important results: since, in the first place, it secured the constitution of Germany, and with it the existence and the rights of both parties. In the second: it produced a recognition of the independence of the republic of the united Netherlands. And in the third: it determined the relation in which Sweden and France should severally stand to Germany. Nevertheless, however important these points may be, and with however much justice we may consider this treaty as the basis of the German constitution, such as it was up to the revolutions of our own day: too much

is undoubtedly ascribed to it, when, as often is the case, it is also considered as the origin of the balance of power in Europe. It never occurred to the negotiators of the peace to regulate the general principles of European policy, nor indeed could it, since they had no commission so to do. The most important and intricate relations existing between the chief powers of Europe were, therefore, naturally left unexamined, nay, in part wholly unmentioned. The war between Spain and France lasted full ten years more, down to the Pyrenean peace; the question whether Portugal should maintain its independence of Spain, was still longer doubtful. Not a thought even was bestowed upon the continental relations of England, because in those days such relations were not in existence; while those of the east of Europe remained undetermined in their main features, till the peace of Oliva, which was twelve years later (1660). Although, therefore, we find the Westphalian peace treated in historical works as the origin of the balance of power in Enrope, this is only one of the many instances which occur, of historians dealing with that as a general principle, which can be truly affirmed only in a narrower sense.

The first half, therefore, of the seventeenth century was the period during which the political influence of the Reformation upon almost every part of the European political system was at its height, especially since England was also involved, at this very time, in civil wars, caused

by religious sects, and leading to the establishment of a national church; and the party of the Hugonots was forcibly disarmed in France.

But the springs of action in morals and in politics gradually lose their strength, like those in material mechanism: and this was the case with the Reformation. The proof of it we shall presently find in the history of the second part of the seventeenth century.

FOURTH PERIOD, 1648—1702.

The government of France is entitled to the credit of having been the first to raise itself above the narrow views to which the bigotry of the other powers confined them. Richelieu, by leaguing himself with Gustavus Adolphus—a cardinal with a protestant king—was the means of pointing out to Europe that political and religious interests might be separately considered.

The age of Louis XIV. caused the gradual spread of this opinion. His political schemes had little to do with religion, and the latter interest would at that time have wholly lost its influence upon the political progress of Europe, had not one of its chief states, viz. England, been still powerfully affected by it. The conflict of factions, in whose causes of strife religion mingled with politics, had been too fierce in that country to allow the ferment to be stilled at once, even by the Restoration (1660); and the mad policy of the last Stuarts gave it too good

cause for continuance. For whilst the introduction of catholicism appeared to them to promise that of absolute power, and was on that account their object, the nation, on the other hand, came to the firm conviction that the national freedom depended upon the maintenance of the protestant faith. The state of constant alliance in which Louis XIV. stood with both Charles II. and James II., gave this maxim a practical influence over the rest of Europe; and thus Louis XIV. was forced, wholly against his will, to assist in raising William III., his most zealous opponent, to the throne of England, upon the fall of the Stuarts.

If this occurrence may be considered as a consequence of the Reformation, it must also, to a certain degree, be considered the last by which it exercised a *general* influence upon the politics of Europe. This important change laid the foundation of the antipathy which has since existed between England and France. But, although the Pretender was occasionally used as a bugbear to England, it was fed by means very different from those supplied by religion, whose place was now occupied by commerce. And as the republic of the united Netherlands has ever since attached itself to England, the naval powers formed, in the scales of Europe, the principal counter-balance to the great influence of France.

Even in the German empire, where the influence of religion upon politics might have been

chiefly expected to remain in force, it now died away; and a very different result was in preparation, from what the most prescient soothsayer could have foretold at the time of the Westphalian peace. The schemes of conquest nourished by Louis XIV., and the renewed aggression of the Turks, (who, fortunately, had been engaged against the Persians in Asia, during the thirty years' war,) put Germany in such a position as to oblige the two religious parties to lay aside their quarrel, although they retained their hatred to each other. Thus the pressure of circumstances caused alliances in which religion had no share; and some of the most powerful protestant princes might be seen uniting their arms with those of the emperor, in order to oppose themselves, at one time, in the west, at another, in the east, to the enemy who pressed in upon them. The just apprehensions which had been caused by the superiority of Sweden, began to fade away of themselves, after the battle of Fehrbellin (1675). The profusion of Christina, and the wild projects of her successors, had exhausted the kingdom; and although the wonderful abilities and extraordinary undertakings of Charles XII. enabled him, for a season, to raise the spirit of the nation even above its natural pitch, and to fit it for unheard-of exertions, yet, even at that time, it was sufficiently evident that a country so little favoured by nature, must needs be left behind amidst the growing prosperity of the rest of Europe. But

though Sweden was thus on the decline, there was another state in the north of Germany which was destined to supply, aye, and more than supply, its place in the politics of Europe.

It has been pointed out above in what degree the *Prussian monarchy* owed its origin to the Reformation; but, though this power may in a certain sense be said to have succeeded to the influence of Sweden, yet there was a marked difference in the mode in which this influence was exercised upon the political system of Europe. While the latter kingdom, owing to its unfavourable geographical position, and the scantiness of its resources, could not possess any great influence over that system, except under a confluence of fortunate circumstances, the influence of Prussia, as soon as the kingdom attained a certain degree of strength, necessarily became far more firm and lasting.

Up to this time, there had been wanting in the machinery of Europe, a state which might keep the north and south securely together. This was supplied by Sweden for a time, but owing to the causes above remarked, it could not long maintain such a position. Prussia, since its accession to the first rank of European powers, has been enabled, by its situation as a country, extending alike to the east and the west, to supply this want. And the spread of its dominions in both those quarters makes it probable that it will continue to do so.

FIFTH PERIOD, 1800.

THE causes, owing to which, the Reformation had begun, even in the last century, to lose its political influence, are evident from what we have already said; and the same causes, joined to others still more powerful, operated in a still stronger degree during the period which we are now to consider. As we are taught, generally, by the nature of things, that springs of moral action retain their vigour for a certain time, and then begin to relax, so we learn from history that, once lost, such energies can never be restored. They operate by means of the immediate relation in which they stand to the prevalent opinions of the day; and, as these, according to the laws of our nature, are subject to constant although gradual changes, the energies dependent upon them must be so likewise.

The age of Louis XIV., especially the first half of it, down to the peace of Nimeguen, had so much to attract the eye, that amidst the crowd of new and important occurrences, which presented itself to the attention and the admiration of the French, the views of that nation could not but be greatly extended. And, although the estimation, in which matters of religion were held, cannot, on the whole, be said to have decreased, yet, as art and literature became more flourishing, their productions divided public attention.

What occurred in France, occurred gradually

in the rest of civilised Europe; and it became every day better understood that there were other objects, besides those of religious controversy, upon which men's minds might be engaged. We must be careful, however, not to push this assertion too far. The spirit of intolerance had, owing to the causes above explained, become too deeply impressed upon the minds of the European nations; and, for a long time to come, not only maintained its influence upon private life, but showed itself without disguise in the administration of their internal affairs. The revocation of the edict of Nantes (by which Louis XIV., in spreading the industry and skill of French artizans over the rest of Europe, unintentionally repaid it, in some degree, for the evils which his wars had caused,) gave proof of what we say, in France; while the famous clause which was added to the fourth article of the treaty of Ryswick, Louis XIV. also provided a new cause of dissension between the catholics and protestants in Germany, the operation of which was for a long time perceptible. But, powerful as might still be the influence of this destructive spirit, in the manner which we have now described, it as undoubtedly ceased to interfere with the mutual relations of the different states, and the higher system of politics upon which these depend. It was from the higher regions that the clouds of prejudice first disappeared, but a long interval elapsed before the sun of knowledge was strong enough to

drive them out from those beneath. In the mean time it was chiefly from individual circumstances, as they arose, that politics received their direction.

While the enterprises of Louis XIV., and the wealth amassed by the successful trade and manufactures of the Dutch, had, during the last period, assigned different spheres to religion and to politics, the *vacant succession to the throne of Spain* gave rise, at the close of the century, to a new source of interest; and one so great and important, that the whole of western Europe was occupied by it for nearly fifteen years. During the same, and even a longer period, a war of equal fury was carried on in the east, by which that quarter of Europe was subjected to a complete revolution of affairs. A power of the first rank was forming itself here, which could have nothing to do with either the catholic or the protestant interest, since it belonged to neither of the two parties—and the glorious career of Eugene and Marlborough, of Charles and Peter, presented a scene so different from any that Europe had hitherto beheld—the duration of it was so long, and the impression which remained from it so deep, that it was impossible to return to the opinions by which politics had previously been governed. The position of almost all the powers of Europe was thereby wholly altered; and this change, joined to the mediocrity of talent displayed by most of the regents and ministers who immediately suc-

ceeded, caused an uncertainty in general politics which, from 1720 to 1740, was not unlike that which characterised the first sixteen years of the sixteenth century. There was the same abundance, and the same change of alliances and counter-alliances—France united itself with England, and Austria made the recognition of the Pragmatic sanction the chief object of her policy! But in all this religion had no share; the hereditary enmity of France and England seemed to be lost in their alliance; and a trading company to the East Indies was considered of far higher importance than any theological dispute. To put an end to these continual changes in the politics of Europe there was wanted the genius of some great man, who should possess sufficient independence to act for himself, and sufficient strength to make his plans effective. This want was supplied by Frederic II. The treaty of Breslau (1742) laid the foundation of a new system for the maintenance of the balance of political power in Europe, of which Prussia and Austria were the chief members, while France, by siding first with the one and then with the other, degraded herself to the rank of a second-rate power.

The difference in religion between the two monarchies had, however, no influence in this; even in the German empire, where the irritation of the two parties was most likely to continue, it gradually disappeared; and everything went to prove that religion had lost its power as a

spring of action in politics, and could be misapplied for the purposes of faction at utmost only in a nation which, like that of the Poles, had taken no real share in the beneficial progress of political knowledge.

It thus became possible that Europe should be shaken by a new and mighty revolution, in which religion had no further share than that the necessity of its existence in the different states became the more evident, the greater the efforts which were made to destroy it. And finally, that very country, among the foremost of whose ancient constitutional principles was that of the greatest possible maintenance of religious equality among its classes, when it was lately engaged in changing its form of government, seems to have thought that an incidental notice at the close of the discussion was sufficient for matters the consideration of which would formerly have been its first care; nay, it is possible that they might not have been alluded to at all, had they not been connected with other questions which still retained their importance.

III. *Effects of the Reformation upon Commerce and the Colonial System.*

The third point of view in which we have to consider the political effects of the Reformation, is that which regards the influence exercised by it upon trade and the colonies. Perhaps, at first sight, this influence may appear so distant, as hardly to be considered within the circle of

our enquiry; but we shall easily succeed in showing how imperfect it would be should we pay no attention to this subject.

The Reformation created the republic of the United Netherlands, and, *through it*, the trade of Europe with the whole world. But, however clear this truth is, it may perhaps be objected to it that commerce would have spread without the assistance of the Reformation, since the passage to both Indies had been previously discovered, and both Spain and Portugal had already set the example. But, putting aside the fact, that what *might perhaps* have happened, cannot enter into our estimate, thus much still appears certain, viz. that without the Reformation trade would have made much slower progress, and might perhaps never have been brought to that height which it has really attained. It needed that bold and enterprising nation which sprang from the necessity of the circumstances in which it was placed, and which, regarding commerce only as the source of its freedom and its existence, devoted itself to the pursuit with all the energy which it could command.

After the year 1595 the Dutch speedily, and in all quarters, surpassed those who till now had governed the Indies. The prosperity of Portugal was already checked by its unfortunate union with Spain (1580—1640); and the narrow policy upon which the colonial trade of Spain itself was conducted, rendered it impossible that any general system of commerce should spring

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from it. On the other hand, how rapid was the progress of this trade in the hands of the Dutch; and how much more rapid even might it have been, had it been freed at the right moment from the fetters of monopoly! May not this, however, which must be allowed as regards the Dutch, be also fairly alleged, although in a less degree, of the English? Was it not during the reign of Elizabeth that the Drakes and Howards of England unfurled her flag upon the most distant seas? Was it not the spirit of protestantism which gave them the victory over the invincible armada, and thus enabled them to lay the foundations of that dominion of the seas, and that system of universal commerce, to which no previous ages ever offered a parallel? Finally, was it not this spirit which animated the free maritime towns of Germany, and raised them to an eminence, which even in the times of general revolution secured to them the respect of the first powers of Europe? We may reason, therefore, as we choose upon the progress which commerce would have made *without* the Reformation, but this much must always be admitted, viz. that to the Reformation it owes the *speed* of its growth, and the *form* which it subsequently assumed.

The *Colonies* are so closely connected with commerce—having been founded with a view to its convenience—that they appear hardly to require any separate mention. If we have shown that without the Reformation there would have

been no Dutch East India trade, there would without it have been no colony at the Cape or at Batavia. I am the more willing, however, to leave all further prosecution of this enquiry to the writers of commercial history, because it might easily lead me to the consideration of questions foreign to my present purpose, and even expose me to the imputation of wishing to attribute to the Reformation consequences too remote to be traced. Nevertheless, the Reformation had so immediate an influence, in another way, and in another quarter of the globe, upon the origin and progress of a colonial state, now flourishing and mighty, and which appears destined in future centuries to guide the commerce of the world, that I cannot pass over this circumstance in silence. Who were those exiles who set themselves down upon the coasts of a new world, in the forests of North America, because in that older land from which they came they were not suffered to worship their God after *their own* fashion? Were they not, to the amount perhaps of four-fifths of their number, men banished across the ocean by the disturbances caused by the Reformation in England? It is true that these plantations were founded during the reign of Elizabeth, but it is a notorious fact in history that the stormy period of the Stuarts was also the period of their first prosperity.

But with their religious freedom the colonists brought also the seeds of their political inde-

pendence, which once planted in the soil of America must have sprung up, and sooner or later borne fruit—and this, perhaps, even without such advantages as were thus afforded it. It is of the nature of colonies—and in this consists their immense importance to mankind—to set in motion a new mass of political ideas. In a new country beyond the sea, all cannot be as it was in the old. In the case of America, therefore, even had its connection with the mother country been more close than it was, the ultimate result would probably have been the same—we know, however, that its dependence upon England did not long continue firm; we know that each of the provinces had already formed its internal constitution upon principles so purely republican, that when they threw off their common allegiance, they possessed the inestimable advantage of having no further revolution to undergo, and scarce any, except the central government to form.

Thus the political consequences of the Reformation spread themselves even beyond the ocean: and, thus it is an undoubted truth, that without the Reformation there would have been no free states of North America! Reader, look beyond the Atlantic, to that new world where Europe is represented in its young and vigorous offspring! then look back to Luther and Tetzel —and then attempt, if thou darest, to foretel the effect of revolutions!

A SKETCH OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFORMATION AS IT AFFECTED PHILOSOPHY.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE JUBILEE OF THE REFORMATION.

[The following lecture was delivered in Latin by the author when acting as Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy at the jubilee of the Reformation, on the second of November, 1817; at the desire of his friends, however, it was translated by himself and published in the "Reformations Almanac" of 1819. The place and occasion of its delivery prevented a fuller development of the subject; it is, therefore, given only as a supplement to the above treatise.]

IF it should appear strange or incongruous to any present that the Faculty of Philosophy should not only claim a solemn interest in the celebration of this day—a day, consecrated to the recollection of that reformation of our faith which was begun three hundred years ago—but should further demonstrate it by a public act; they will cease from their astonishment when they more fully consider the many and great benefits which are owed to it, not only by theology, but

by all those sciences which tend to develope the faculties of mankind. For the principle which we are accustomed to admit as true, in all great revolutions, whether of our own, or of earlier times, viz. "that their progress and operations have proved much more extensive than the originators of them proposed, and that they could by no means be confined within the limits which these prescribed to them,"—this principle may with equal certainty be applied to the Reformation.—It is true, indeed, that, even with regard to single events, it is often difficult for the historian to ascertain the causes from which they proceed: but now, after the lapse of three centuries, our position has become such, that we may, with confidence, give judgment upon those general consequences which have resulted from so great a change. These, however, have been so well explained by several distinguished writers that it would be thought superfluous to trace them out anew; we shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a slight consideration of that part of its influence which was exercised upon philosophy.

It cannot be supposed that it would enter into the plan of the reformers—men occupied more with things appertaining to God than to man—to found new systems of philosophy. Still, however, they perceived that philosophy stood in no less need than theology of being purified from the subtleties of the schoolmen; and the man most impressed with this, was one whose memory is immortal, and whom we justly place

next after Luther—Melancthon. "I desire," says he in his discourses, "a sound philosophy; not those empty words to which nothing real corresponds. For only one system of philosophy can be allowed, and that must be the least sophistic, and must pursue the true method." These are, in truth, golden words of thine, Melancthon, and of which one might well say, that they had been written for our times! But the papal authority once shattered and broken, the tie once dissolved which had bound philosophy so closely to the doctrines of the church—how could it be otherwise than that its progress, like that of religion, should be more free and unconstrained? To endeavour fully to trace this out would require too much digression and be alien to this place and occasion; but we may be allowed to point out that which the annals of philosophy most clearly show, viz. that it has shed a new light upon those countries alone, in which religion was cleared of its errors by the reformers. Among the Spaniards, and in other nations to whom these were denied all access, the doctors of the schools still reign triumphant; and we in vain look among them for a Leibnitz, a Hume, a Locke, or Kant, and others, who like these opened out the fountains of a purer philosophy. Can this be a mere accident? Or must we not rather admit that it resulted from the nature of the Reformation? Lest, however, any one should still doubt, we will endeavour in a few words to show more plainly

the advantages which philosophy owes to the Reformation.

We may fairly begin by laying it down that the reformers caused it to be thought allowable to speculate freely as to *God, and what appertains to Him.* We are willing to admit that questions touching the divine nature and substance (as the phrase ran) were frequently proposed by the schoolmen, and answered in a variety of ways; but whoever reads their works must allow that they sought much more frequently to exercise their ingenuity in subtle and often impertinent questions, than to propose any thing worthy of the majesty of the Godhead. For as they were obliged to keep themselves within the limits prescribed by the church, in order to avoid the charge of heresy, what else could be expected than that they should lose themselves in curious and idle investigations. On the other hand, the propagators of the reformed faith although they took, and rightly took, the holy scriptures as the foundation of theology, yet by no means required that philosophy should rest upon the same grounds. A wide field was, therefore, opened to its enquiries; and thus it became possible for that system of knowledge to be founded and to be developed by the genius of great men, to which we rightly give the first place among philosophical systems—viz. that of *natural theology,* which, setting out from the idea of a supreme Being, undertakes to prove that there is a God: that He exists independently of

the world: and that He is the cause of the existence of the world. How excellently Melancthon has treated this subject will be acknowledged by those who consult his work on physics, in which the proofs of God's being and of his government of the world, (which have been more fully illustrated by philosophers of later days,) are to be found clearly and evidently set forth. And, though amongst more modern enquirers there may be some, who have not only used, but abused the freedom procured them by the heroes of the Reformation, and thus either lost themselves in atheism or advanced far towards it, yet it is an acknowledged truth that the abuse should not vitiate the use; while the writings of those men, to whom not only their own but subsequent times have assigned the first rank among philosophers, afford proofs that their speculations upon the nature of the Godhead were pursued in a modest and reverent spirit.

In the company, or at least in the train, of this better method of thinking and speaking of God and religion, came that improved philosophy of *human life*, which forms the subject of our *second* assertion. That the schools of the sophists of those days should, by their undivided attention to logic, have wholly excluded practical philosophy, was naturally to be expected. This practical philosophy rests upon enquiries into the nature of man; it must be shown what the disposition of our nature and its powers are:

what suits, what is repugnant to it, and consequently, what is to be desired, and what shunned. It must be enquired what seeds of virtue or vice are implanted in us; what is the nature of our passions, what the method of controlling them? Finally, in what consists true happiness, what the object of our life should be, and how we may best attain it? Now, although the princes of Greek philosophy had reasoned admirably upon all these topics, although they had been treated of by Aristotle, whose name was for ever in their mouths, yet the schoolmen cared little for them and sought their reputation only in useless disputes.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that it was not till the light of the Reformation had arisen, that a system of practical philosophy, really deserving of the name, could be formed; especially as regards that branch of it, which is rightly considered the most important—the philosophy of moral conduct. Here, too, Melancthon first broke the ground in his "Elements of Ethics," which appeared at Wittenberg in the year 1550; and in which he forsakes his usual adherence to Aristotle, and after refuting the doctrines of Epicurus and the stoics, defines virtue to be the obedience of the will to such rules of action as are in practical accordance with the commands of God. It is hardly necessary to remark that no other branch of philosophy has been cultivated with greater diligence or success among the more enlightened nations—the Germans, the

French, and the English; a point upon which we may justly pride ourselves, since none is more adapted to the nature and wants of men. Time and place forbid the enumeration of the writings of those immortal authors, especially those of Great Britain, who have treated of it; of whom we may say, as the Greeks did of Socrates, that by their means philosophy has been called down from heaven to walk upon the earth.

The Reformation may, therefore, justly claim the credit of having applied philosophy to the improvement of morality; and, generally, of having brought it back to the common purposes of life. It was no longer wasted upon the solution of problems, which required acuteness perhaps, but which, to use Melancthon's expression, had no correspondent realities. It did not, however, confine itself within the limits of private life, but having once emerged from the gloom of the schools into the light of day, undertook the *improvement of public life.* The example was set in Great Britain, and speedily followed elsewhere, of discussing those most important questions which relate to the constitutions of states, their administration and government; and out of this we have seen a new and improved order of things proceed, not only in Europe, as in Great Britain, the Netherlands, and elsewhere, but even beyond the ocean, in America, where the seeds of new constitutions were sown, and are now in the perfection of their growth. To trace this out, however, is the province of his-

tory; for my part I conceive that I have sufficiently proved the proposition from which I set out, and to which I return: viz. That by those who follow the banners of philosophy, the day, which we are now celebrating, must be accounted a festival—a festival dedicated to events which have procured us that without which there can be no philosophy, and no true enjoyment of life —"*The right of thinking as we will, and of speaking as we think.*"

ON THE RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRACTICAL INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL THEORIES, AND ON THE PRESERVATION OF MONARCHICAL PRINCIPLES IN MODERN EUROPE.

ON THE RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRACTICAL INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL THEORIES, ETC.

If we except the last ten years of the past century from our review, we shall find that the states which composed the political system of modern Europe, were constituted without any reference to general theory; they arose for the most part out of the feudal system, and gradually accommodated themselves to the circumstances which new times and new events produced. It would therefore be idle to expect that any, even the most perfect of them, should correspond with an abstract theory of government. The spread of intellectual acquirements, however, produced in several of these states an attention to political reasonings, and these in turn led to speculative systems, and schemes of new constitutions. The influence of the latter began, long before the disturbances of our own day, to exercise a political influence, and this at last became so great that it has been customary to attribute those violent revolutions which caused

the ruin of more than one existing government, to these very speculations.

The questions which I propose to examine are "How the spirit of enquiry with regard to distinctions in the forms of government, first arose in modern Europe?" "How this became the source of political reasoning?" "How this again formed the base of abstract theories?" "What practical influence the latter exerted generally; and what in particular upon the late revolutions?" With these another, and that of the highest practical importance, becomes naturally associated, viz. "What is requisite for the maintenance of the monarchical principle in constitutional governments?" In this case the enquiry will be directed only to the "constitution," not to the administration, of "power in the different states"—no thinking man, however, can regard this subject with indifference: I only hope that the mode in which it is treated may be equal to its importance!

It might at first sight appear as though a reference to actual history would be a superfluous labour—speculation, it may be urged, arose of itself, and was independent of reality. Why then turn to it for assistance? We shall soon, however, perceive that this was not the case; and that, if the spirit of political speculation *did* rise above the politics of the day, it was from the latter that it derived its origin, and that it never became wholly independent of them. These questions, therefore, will admit of no other so-

lution than what may be obtained by connecting them with history, and drawing our answers, in part at least, from it.

In order to create a spirit of political speculation it is necessary that there should be some outward stimulant, as well as a considerable degree of philosophical education in the people among whom it is to arise.

The external causes which induce thought and argument on these subjects, are struggles, when such take place, with regard to the forms of the constitution. The neighbourhood of various states governed in various manners, with the relations and contrasts between them—and above all, the formation of new states by colonisation.

If to these qualifications, habits of philosophical enquiry of a higher order be added, should men have taught themselves to rise from the particular to the general, from facts to principles, the path is opened for political speculation.

It was thus that it arose and perfected itself among the Greeks, where external causes were so many and so various.—And in support of this view its opposite was sufficiently proved during the middle ages, thoughout which it was impossible that any traces of such speculations should appear.—The feudal systems, strictly so called, admitted of no free citizenships, and allowed no varieties of government.—That which was dig-

nified by the name of freedom, was in general nothing but a contest of the nobility against their princes, which if it failed, begot a despotism; if it succeeded, was the signal of club-law and anarchy.

Amid such scenes as these, there was little room for political speculation, even if the total absence of philosophical ideas had not rendered it impossible.

Among those countries in which it might have been expected to give the earliest signs of life, Italy was undoubtedly the first; all the ordinary causes appear to have united here—a number of small states arose near each other—republican constitutions were established—political parties were every where at work and at variance; and with all this, the arts and sciences were in the full splendour of their revival.

The appearance of Italy in the fifteenth century recalls most fully the picture of ancient Greece. And yet in Italy political theories were as few, as in Greece they had been many! a result both unexpected and difficult to explain.

Still, however, I think that this phenomenon may be in a great part accounted for, if we remember that there never was a philosophical system of character or influence which prospered under the sky of Italy. No nation of civilised Europe has given birth to so few theories as the Italian—none has had less genius for such pursuits.—The history of the Roman philosophy, a mere echo of the Grecian, proves this of

its earlier ages, nor was it otherwise in its later.

At the revival of science Plato and Aristotle were the chief and only guides, and even when the trammels of this superstition had been broken through, Italy produced no original minds whose life and works formed an era in philosophy.—If, then, speculative science in general made no great advance here, we cannot reasonably expect that that part of it which has reference to politics should have made any, since, from its very nature, it must be one of the last branches which are put forth from that stock.

This incapacity for theory, however, had the effect of directing the Italians more immediately to practice, and they were considered the deepest and most accomplished politicians of Europe.—But as they held diplomacy to be an empty name, unless it included cunning and intrigue, they by this view offered another impediment to a right cultivation of the subject.

Their highest principles of policy were nothing better than a collection of maxims, and these never ripened, nor could ripen, into a science. The only writer of that period who need be mentioned here, is Machiavel; and his works afford the strongest confirmation of what we advance.—His "Principe," and his "Discorsi sopra Livio[a]," are full of reasoning such as

[a] [This critique appears to have escaped M. Artaud in his laborious treatise on the life and works of the Florentine secretary. But to judge from the manner in which he has met some similar observations of

we have described, the result partly of his historical studies, partly of his own experience; and they contain sufficient evidence that a practical attention to history was in force at this period, and that the Italians were likely enough to prove good historians, but not great theorists.

The first quarter of the sixteenth century witnessed the breaking out of the reformation. I have endeavoured in a former treatise to prove the fact, and point out the manner of its acquiring a political tendency; I have also followed up its practical results. That, by its influence on Germany, on the Netherlands, on England, and, for a considerable period, on France, it became the origin of political freedom in Europe, can be a matter of doubt only to those who "having eyes, see not;" and this once admitted, it will not be difficult to show that the same causes led to its being the origin of political speculation also.

Meantime, however, we must remember, that the very essence of the reformation, and the first direction of its power, rendered it impossible that this should be the case, either immediately, or even mediately, without some interval of time—the activity to which it aroused the human intellect was exerted then, and long after, upon subjects wholly unconnected with political speculation. It is not necessary to dwell upon this

Raumer, it is one to which Machiavel's most ardent admirers can hardly object. See Machiavel, son Genie et ses Erreurs, par M. Artaud, vol. ii. p. 490. Tr.]

point here, for who can be ignorant, that for a considerable time religious controversies, and those alone, were capable of exciting general interest? Still, however, all this being admitted, it cannot but seem strange, that the great practical influence which the reformation exercised upon the constitution of the various states, should have been so partially and so slowly followed by any attempt at theory on the principles of their formation.

I do not speak of Germany—here the point in dispute was the relation which should exist between the states and the emperor, and, as immediately connected with it, that between the protestant and the catholic parties—and this the sword decided.

But the state in which such views might have been first expected, was the republic of the United Netherlands.—The reformation called that state into existence—the banner of liberty was there formally displayed—republican maxims were those chiefly adopted and cherished—the state itself became deeply involved in the general politics of the day, and knowledge was at the same time busy among its members; and yet the speculative part of government was left almost wholly untouched!

The causes of this, however, will soon become evident if we look to the main object of the revolution by whose means that state was formed—innovations in the constitution were the last things it had in view—it struggled

rather to maintain and assert the old rights and privileges of the states; necessity alone induced the Netherlands to shake off their allegiance to the king of Spain; that accomplished, they turned to seek other masters, and the states finally became republican, merely because they could find none. Was it likely, then, that political theories should spring up here, where no new schemes of government called for their interference?

In the mean time, however, the republic had a long struggle for independence to maintain.—It came in various contact with foreign powers, and was more or less connected with the great wars of the time.

Though no questions, therefore, were raised as to the different forms of the constitution, yet it was impossible but that some should arise as to the mutual rights and relations of states.

This subject received the attention of one of the republic's greatest citizens, and produced the famous work of Hugo Grotius "De Jure Belli et Pacis."

It is true that this treatise led its author into some researches, respecting the natural rights of man, and the principles on which they are founded, without which he thought he could not attain to a just view of his subject. But the theory of civil government could gain little from a work devoted to another and separate enquiry; while the manner in which this enquiry itself is con-

ducted, is by no means attractive to readers of our own time.

Grotius was more a man of learning than a philosopher, and he has encumbered his work with a mass of historical and philological research, which could not possibly turn to its advantage.—Still, however, it must rank among the highest efforts, not only of his own, but of all subsequent times; for it was no mean advantage to point out that there is, or at least that there ought to be, a law of nations. Moreover, the great name which Grotius had acquired, and which associated him, not only with the most ditinguished men of learning, but, as a statesman, with the princes and courts of his day, secured his principles an admittance into the circle in which they were most likely to obtain a ready practical influence[b].

[b] [The following defence of Grotius is interesting, as coming from the pen of the late sir James Mackintosh: and it will be the more appreciated as the pamphlet from which it is taken is now rarely to be met with.

"Few works were more celebrated than that of Grotius in his own days, and the age which succeeded. It has, however, been the fashion of the last half century to depreciate his work as a shapeless compilation, in which reason lies buried under a mass of authorities and quotations. This fashion originated among French wits and declaimers, and it has been, I know not for what reason, adopted, though with far greater moderation and decency, by some respectable writers among ourselves. As to those who first used this language, the most candid supposition that we can make with respect to them, is, that they never read the work; for if they had not been deterred from the perusal of it by such a formidable display of Greek characters, they must soon have discovered that Grotius never quotes on any subject till he has first appealed to some principles; and often, in my humble opinion, though not always, to the soundest and most rational principles.

The treatise "De Jure Belli et Pacis" may, on the whole, be considered as a fair earnest of what the spreading intelligence of the day might eventually produce.

The religious disturbances and wars of the Hugonots in France took place at the same time as the establishment of the republic of the Netherlands, and appear to have been much more calculated to excite a spirit of political speculation.

It was question here not only of preserving what was old, but of forming what was new.

But another sort of answer is due to some of those who* have criticised Grotius, and that answer might be given in the words of Grotius himself. He was not of such a stupid and servile cast of mind, as to quote the opinions of poets or orators, of historians and philosophers, as those of judges from whose decision there was no appeal. He quotes them, as he tells us himself, as witnesses, whose conspiring testimony, mightily strengthened by their discordance on almost every other subject, is a conclusive proof of the unanimity of the whole human race on the great rules of duty, and the fundamental principles of morals. On such matters poets and orators are the most unexceptionable of all witnesses; for they address themselves to the general feeling and sympathies of mankind; they are neither warped by system, nor perverted by sophistry; they can attain none of their objects; they can neither please nor persuade if they dwell on moral sentiments not in unison with those of their reader: no system of moral philosophy can surely disregard the general feelings of human nature, and the according judgments of all ages and nations. But where are those feelings and that judgment recorded and observed? In those very writings which Grotius is gravely blamed for having quoted. The usages and laws of nations, the events of history, the opinions of philosophers, the sentiments of orators and poets, as well as the observation of common life, are, in truth, the materials out of which the science of morality is formed; and those who neglect them are justly chargeable with a vain attempt to philosophise, without regard to fact and experience, the sole foundations of all true philosophy."—*A Discourse on the Study of the Law of Nature and Nations, etc.* p. 17. Tr.]

* Paley, pref. to *Moral and Political Philosophy*, (to whom we may add Prof. Heeren, in the passage of the text.)

The Hugonot party, if it never actually established a republic, was yet much more inclined to republicanism than the insurgents of the Netherlands.—But then the times of civil war are not the times of quiet contemplation, and of theory; and as the tumult became more wild, the pursuits of literature gave way wholly to violence and bloodshed, or, if they still attracted attention, it was only for purposes of theological debate.

Still, amidst these disturbances, one writer made his appearance, who attracted too much notice to be lightly passed over—This was John Bodin[c], the author of a work "De Republicâ;" he was not only a man of learning, but took a share in the transactions of the time, and spoke in favour of the Hugonots, whose religion he had from the first embraced, at the diet of Blois.—This did not, however, prevent him from being much esteemed by Henry III., with whose brother, Francis of Alençon, he was still more intimately connected.

As a political writer he claims a distinguished place; indeed, few have surpassed him in philosophical distinctness of ideas, or in a general, and at the same time accurate, acquaintance with the constitutions both of ancient and modern times. The whole course of his enquiry bears a certain resemblance to that pursued by Aris-

[c] Johannis Bodini, *De Rep.* lib. vi. first published in French 1576, but revised, enlarged, and translated into Latin by himself 1584. Bodin was born 1529, and died 1596.

totle, but he is far from being a servile imitator, and it is undeniable that he materially advanced the science of government.

Some of its most important principles he was the first to embrace and define. He begins from a conception of the state as "a number of families, whose common concerns are directed by a supreme power, justly exercised." The supreme power consists in "the right of making laws, and seeing that these are executed[d]." We here find the germ of that principle of the distinction between the two powers (the legislative and the executive) which owes its full and careful development to later writers. He was the first who asserted the "Indivisibility[e] of the the supreme power or sovereignty," (Majestas), from which he argued that the common opinions with respect to mixed governments, rested upon entirely false grounds, since these are impossible without a separation of the sovereignty. He has defined more accurately the limits of what we term "absolute monarchy (regia potestas)," of "despotism," and of "tyranny," than any[f] subsequent writers. He has the great merit of having put in a clear light one of the most important truths of government, and one to which he was himself much attached, (viz.) "That the form of the constitution will not afford any direct argument as to the spirit in which a state is governed, and that the latter may be very re-

[d] *De Republicâ*, lib. ii. p. 275. [e] Ib. lib. ii. p. 275.
[f] Ib, lib. ii. p. 313. sq.

publican in a state which is properly monarchical[g], as well as despotic under the forms of a republic." Finally, he was the FIRST who, carefully avoiding to set up any perfect ideal constitution, which he would every where apply, gave a full explanation of all the circumstances of climate and of national peculiarities, whether mental or bodily, which ought to be considered in framing the constitution of a state[h,i].

This division of his work would do no discredit to Montesqueiu himself, whose precursor, and that no unworthy one, he was.

Notwithstanding these and other undeniable merits, and in spite of the approbation which it drew from the best of his contemporaries[k], Bodin's work did not attain to that practical influence which it deserved.

The seed which he scattered fell upon a soil as yet too little prepared to receive it, and the observation before made, that political speculation can never support itself except in connection with philosophy, is here remarkably established. The nation was not yet ripe.

The state of France, during the seventeenth

[g] Ib. lib. ii. p. 305. sq.

[h] Ib. lib. v. p. 767. sq.

[i] [Although Bodin may be deservedly praised for the *adoption* of the two last points, and for the expansion of the former of them, he is indebted to ARISTOTLE's *Politics* for the sound philosophy by which they are distinguished. Aristotle, it is true, has drawn a picture of the government under which he imagines the greatest happiness may be obtained, but he has expressly stated what previous conditions are necessary to its formation, and how unfit it would be for a society in which these were wanting. TR.]

[k] [The testimony of De Thou and others may be found under the article Bodin, in Bayle. TR.]

century, was not such as to lead us to expect the requisite maturity. As soon as the Hugonots were suppressed, or at least disarmed, Richelieu laid the foundation of the absolute power of the crown, and Louis XIV. confirmed it without any further resistance from the people. Even if a spirit of political enquiry had by chance arisen among individuals, where was it to find means of increase? Surely not among a people who not only submitted without a murmur to the fetters which were imposed upon them, but who went so far in their greediness for fame rather than freedom, as to be proud of the chains they wore.

We must, therefore, turn to another land, to one in which, by the concurrence of more fortunate circumstances, the theory of civil government became fully developed, and acquired a great practical influence—an influence moreover exerted rather to preserve than to destroy—I mean to England.

It might be mentioned here almost without a rival, were it not that Geneva, the smallest state in Europe, makes its pre-eminence in this respect, somewhat doubtful.

The progress which the theory of government made in England is mainly attributable to the circumstances of that country, and to understand these we must give a cursory glance at the history of its constitution. This was at first a branch of the great feudal system, which was the origin of most of the European governments

and which had been introduced in its full rigour by William the Conqueror in 1066, when he took possession of England. The feudal customs fell into disuse here, as elsewhere, for the vassals were not slow in taking advantage of the circumstances of the times, and even under the immediate successors of the Conqueror obtained considerable privileges, which, by degrees, ripened into a formal warrant of their liberties, and were embodied in Magna Charta (1215).

It was not, however, the armed opposition which the nobles offered to their sovereign, for this was of much more frequent occurrence in other countries: nor was it the growth of a middle order: nor yet the representation of this order in parliament, which gave to the British constitution its peculiar character; for all these phenomena are to be found alike in the French and Spanish histories. The causes of it lay *in the different shape which rank assumed in England, compared with other countries, in the variety of relations which existed between the nobles and the commons, and by means of which it became possible to constitute the Lower House in such a form as it afterwards assumed.*

We might expect that a subject, which has received so much attention from the best writers, should be clearly understood, but it neither is, nor indeed ever will be.

The early history of the British parliament, especially during the thirteenth century, when its limits were first defined, is more scantily supplied

from original documents than can well be believed. And yet this ought not to astonish us if we remember that in England, as in other countries of Europe during the middle ages, no institution of any note arose at once and from a preconcerted scheme, but that they were all of gradual formation, and dependent on the changes of men's wants and circumstances. Thus many things which afterwards became of the highest importance were very far from being, or, at least, from appearing so, at first: and it was consequently impossible for the chroniclers of the day to perceive the advantage of recording them. We must be content, therefore, to receive such accounts of the British parliament as we have of the other institutions of the middle ages.

The separation of the higher from the lower nobility took place in other countries of Europe as well as in England, but in no other country did the latter so entirely unite with the middle orders, as to rank with them in one house, and become thus wholly distinct from the peers. But if the question be proposed, as to How the separation of the upper and lower nobles actually took place? if it be asked How it happened that the inferior nobles sent deputies chosen from the counties instead of appearing in person? When this first became customary? When the towns first returned members? (not when they are first noticed by the chroniclers as having done so).—And, lastly, When and how the deputies from the counties became united in one body with

those from the towns?—We can only say that the most careful enquirers into British history can give nothing but probable surmises on the subject, and are totally unable to support their opinions by any historical references. This general uncertainty will be at once evident to any one who will examine the various and very different accounts which are given by English historians of the origin of their constitution. Some, and those of the first rank, have not scrupled seriously to assert, that the early Britons brought their liberties with them from the forests in which they dwelt!

Without going more deeply into these questions, which would be here misplaced, it is sufficient to remark, that the British constitution had received the impress of its most important characters long before England could boast of any degree of political liberty superior to that enjoyed by other states. It had its upper house composed of the lords spiritual and temporal, and its lower house composed of members for the towns and counties—but what was this great parliament, not only before the time of the Tudors, but even under their dominion, except an instrument of command, which Henry VII. and VIII., and their successor Elizabeth, knew most excellently how to apply to the furtherance of their own designs?

Here, again, we have a palpable example how little we may argue from the form to the spirit of a government; meantime, however, this form

was more perfect than could be found elsewhere, and it needed only a confluence of fortunate events to give it life, and breathe sentiments of freedom into the people.

This the reformation effected.—Not only by it was the religion of the land altered, but its political greatness, under the reign and guidance of Elizabeth, securely founded. By this *greatness*[1] the spirit of the people became awakened; but as it did not proceed immediately from the constitution, it was necessary that the latter should receive a shock, nay, for a time, a total overthrow, before it could be fully appreciated, and by being restored, and at the same time indissolubly connected with religion, could be looked up to as the palladium of British freedom.

The history of the troubles which produced the civil war, which overturned the throne, and which terminated with the restoration, are sufficiently known, and require barely to be alluded to. The only question in connection with which they have any interest here, refers to the probable causes of their having been more favourable to the development of political speculation than the disturbances of any other country, and that in such a degree as to have produced and matured some of its noblest fruits.

The obvious reason of this, in my opinion, is, that the troubles and wars in England were not brought about, as in other countries, merely by

[1] See the treatise *On the political consequences of the Reformation.*

practical grievances, *but that they depended, from the first, upon theoretical points of dispute,* which necessarily led to more extended enquiries.

Thus, when the Stuarts mounted the British throne (1603), they brought with them a maxim which was preserved and passed from father to son as an heirloom, and which James I. was imprudent enough to assert upon every occasion, even in open parliament, viz. "That the kingly power emanated for God—that it was therefore absolute, or if not actually so, that it ought of right to be so—that what were termed the "rights" of the people and the parliament, were not properly so called, but merely grants and privileges, which had been allowed to them by the crown, and which the crown might therefore resume as easily as it had bestowed them." These principles, however, were in direct opposition to the ideas which the reformation had rendered current, and which had more particularly obtained with the presbyterian and puritanic parties, then rapidly spreading in England, and which from the form of their religious government were inclined to carry republican, and even democratic, principles into the government of the state. Elizabeth had entertained no less exalted an idea of her power than the two first Stuarts, in fact she had exercised it with more freedom than they: but then she had avoided what the pedantic folly of James I. led him to indulge in, and had not brought her maxims before the public, and thus made a com-

mon talk of matters, which the interest of princes should teach them to conceal as the mysteries of their craft, the "Arcana dominationis."

These principles, and the collisions between the king and the parliament, which resulted from them, formed the train which lighted up England with the flames of civil war. They brought Charles to the scaffold, and overturned the throne. But even when the restoration had caused a seeming tranquillity, the fire still smouldered in its ashes. The restoration was rather the work of party spirit, and of a passing change in public opinion, effected by the experience of anarchy and the despotism of the sword, than of calm and well exercised reason.

The opportunity which then presented itself of amending the defects of the constitution passed by unemployed. And Charles II. received the crown on the same doubtful understanding of its authority, as that on which it had been held by his ancestors. Would that he had been as worthy of it even as his unfortunate father! As it was, he adopted the very principles which cost the latter his life, while he enhanced their tendency to despotism by his own disposition to enforce them. The attempt of his brother to introduce tyranny and priestcraft, and the consequences of his folly, need hardly be alluded to.

Every circumstance of the time—the continued disturbances—the party distinction of whigs and tories in which they ended—the

rapid growth of literature under Charles II., all conspired to advance political speculations to the utmost.—But as these speculations proceeded immediately from the practical affairs of life, it was unavoidable that they should carry some traces of their origin along with them. The questions chiefly debated were those to which the transactions of the day naturally led, and the decision of which was invested with a direct practical importance. All these questions may be reduced under one head, viz. Whether the kingly power should be absolute or not? or, what was considered equivalent, Whether the sovereignty belonged to the king or to the people? On such a subject as this, no one, who bore the least affection to his country, could remain wholly without interest: we must not therefore be astonished at the earnestness with which the dispute was carried on.

It would appear almost incredible to any one unversed in the writings of the time, to what an extent the assertors of the kingly power proceeded, and on what grounds they sought to rest their claim. One of these must be here mentioned, who, it is true, has long sunk into the oblivion which he deserved, but who must not be passed over in this place, as his treatise entitled "Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings[m]," served as a whetstone on which the great

[m] It forms part of *The Political Discourses* of Robert Filmer, Bart. London, 1682.

writers of the opposite side sharpened and improved their wits. It was to the extravagant, and in some degree ludicrous tenets of Filmer and his school, that the cause which they advocated chiefly owed its fall. For, as they derived the kingly power immediately from God, they were forced into historical deductions for their proof. They had recourse, therefore, to the sacred annals: but as, unfortunately, the kingly power does not there date beyond a particular era, they fell back upon the patriarchs, and asserted boldly that Abraham and Noah, and lastly, that Adam himself had been kings. In order to make this good they endeavoured to show that the kingly power proceeded from the paternal, and that, accordingly, kings, being the fathers of their people, might exercise as unrestricted an authority over them as fathers over their children. But as all children, by the very fact of their birth, become subjected to the government of their father, it follows of course that no man can be born free: and again, as the paternal authority has been transferred to the kings of the earth, all men come by their birth under this absolute power, and are in fact born as a sort of property and appendage to it. By these steps Filmer arrived at the conclusion that the most absolute despotism is fairly founded, and as such he defended it, asserting that both the persons and goods of the subjects are nothing more than the property of the prince, with which he may do as he pleases; that on this ac-

count every opposition of the subjects is open rebellion, and that in no possible case can a king be deposed from his authority.

The absurdity of these propositions, which became inevitable as soon as the attempt was made to deduce the kingly power historically from God, would probably have decided the fate of the theories to which they belonged, even without any attack from without. But amongst the supporters of absolute power, another writer appeared, who may claim his rank with the first thinkers of all ages, and who defended his opinion with very different weapons from those of Filmer—that writer was Thomas Hobbes. Of his philosophical works those which are here referred to are his treatise "De Cive" and his "Leviathan."[n]

External causes may, to a certain degree, have induced Hobbes to come forward as the champion of absolute power. He not only belonged to the royal party, but was tutor to Charles II. when an exile in France. Nevertheless, this influence most assuredly did not extend further than to give his mind a turn of thought natural to the events of the time, and to his own peculiar circumstances. We should do him great injustice, were we to suspect him of fawning or hy-

[n] The "*De Cive*" forms the third division of his *Elementa Philos.* The "*Leviathan*," sive de materia formâ et potestate civitatis, is only a further development of it.

Hobbes was born 1588, and died 1679. His *Elementa* appeared first in 1650, and the *Leviathan* 1651, in the time of Cromwell. His works were first published in 1668 in a perfect form.

pocrisy. His character is much more that of a logical and consistent reasoner of the highest order, who never advanced a proposition which he for a moment doubted that he could establish in its fullest sense.

Hobbes is remarkable for having been the first who sought to ground the theory of government upon natural right, and what is termed "the state of nature." This notion of a "state of nature," from which men are supposed to have advanced into civil society, (however differently it may have been entertained,) has formed the basis of all subsequent speculations, down to the time of Rousseau; and from the indefiniteness of the idea which it introduced, has contributed not a little to perplex the theory of government.

If by "the state of nature[o]" we are to understand the condition of men who are not formed into one community, and who do not acknowledge the relations of civil life, it cannot be denied that nations have existed, and still exist, in this condition. But in order to determine the limits between the state of nature here unstood, and the civil community to which it is opposed, we must have a clear idea of what that civil community implies.

Now theorists usually define the latter as con-

[o] [For a further examination of this juggling phrase I cannot do better than refer the reader to Mr. LEWIS's *Remarks on the Use and Abuse of some Political Terms.* London, 1832. Doctor FERGUSON's *Essay on the History of Civil Society,* contains many beautiful and just observations on the true meaning of the words. TR.]

stituted by the possession of sovereignty, whether exercised by the whole body, or by a few, or by one of its members. This definition, however, is of little practical use in the study of history, for there are many nations to which it would apply, and yet of whom it would be hard to say that they form a state, and live in civil society. All the great pastoral tribes are, or at least were, in possession of sovereignty as independent nations; and this sovereignty was exercised by the heads of particular families among themselves; and yet no one would argue that the Calmucs, or the Kirgisian and Arabian Bedouins, form what is properly termed a state (*Civitas*). This, in fact, if we use the word in its common historical sense, can only be constituted by a people, whether great or small—*which possesses and permanently inhabits one particular country;* or in other words, *fixed places of abode and possesssions in land* form the second *necessary* qualification of every state, in the practical sense of the word. The reason of this is, that the whole institution, or assembly of institutions, which we term a state, attains its development and application only by property in land. The first, though not the only object of a state, is the *security of property:* now, although moveables are just as much property as land, yet it is only where the latter has been appropriated that the right of property attains to its full importance: and not only this, but the necessity of defining its different forms by laws is then for the first

time perceived, because land is, from its nature, the only permanent object of this right[p].

Although a state, then, may be conceived in theory to exist without property in land, yet in reality the one can never exist without the other; and it is the neglect with which this fact has been passed over, that has mainly contributed to give to political systems that character of visionary speculation, which must in all theories attend the omission of such points as are necessary to their practical application.

A sufficient proof of this is furnished by the notion of a "state of nature," and the uses to which it has been put.

For if this imaginary condition be opposed to civil society, and the latter can only exist where there are fixed abodes and landed property, we must conclude that all nations unprovided with these are living in a state of nature. From this it follows, that "the state of nature" embraces under it all those conditions which may be imagined to exist before the institution of civil society. But as among these there are marked

[p] [Thus, in early times, the law of England seems to have taken no cognizance of moveable property, but to have confined itself to "things that are in their nature more permanent and immoveable, as lands and houses, and the profits issuing therout." And although commerce, by the vast increase of moveable property which it has caused, has naturally induced great changes in the legal contemplation of it, yet the distinction even in name between "real" and "personal" property, the different laws of descent which they follow, and the greater solemnities requisite to the transfer and devise of the former, compared to what are imposed by law upon the latter, show the secondary place which moveables still occupy. See BLACKSTONE, *Com.* B. II. c. xxiv. TR.]

gradations, gradations which cannot escape the merest tyro in history, the only conception of "the state of nature" at which we arrive, is negative; that is, it excludes what does not belong to it, without defining what does: it excludes "civil society," but it does not define the positive condition which the term "state of nature" is intended to denote.

This consideration, however, did not once enter the minds of our theorists. Each contemplated *his own* state of nature as something positive, and gave such a description of it as best pleased himself. No wonder, then, that there should be a little variety in the picture!—Hobbes conceived the first design.

According to him, men in the state of nature, live in continued hostility to each other. When in this condition, they are all equal, since they have a mutual right to make war upon, and even to kill each other. They all have the will to commit injuries, and therefore scruple not to do so—a war thus arises of all against all, and the danger becomes universal, as the weaker must ever yield to the stronger.—It is natural, meantime, that some protection should be sought against these dangers; nay, it is evident that neither individuals, nor even the whole race of man, could suffice to keep up a war at once universal, and in all probability eternal—men perceived this, and on this account forsook the state of nature, and formed themselves into civil society, which is therefore the offspring of fear.

On this hypothesis, the instability of which is apparent from what we have before said, Hobbes constructed his political theory. The second step he took led him into a new hypothesis.—Out of this state of nature it would have been impossible to advance without some specific agreement: and hence arose the principle, since considered so important, that "*the state is founded upon a compact*[q]."

This compact consisted in a general agreement of all[r] to submit their private will to the will of one—it matters not whether this be one individual, or one assemblage of persons—whose will should thus become the will of all. Whoever procures his will to be thus respected, possesses the sovereign power and majesty: he is the prince, the others are his subjects.—As soon, therefore, as the sovereignty is thus entrusted to

[q] [The idea that the state is founded upon a contract, cannot be said to have been originated by Hobbes, although he was perhaps the first who in modern times made this the only and necessary commencement of society. Hooker, who died half a century before the *Leviathan* was published, (but whose *Eccl. Polity*, although constanly referred to by Locke, appears to have escaped the notice of Prof. Heeren,) holds very express language to that effect. "So that in a word, all public regiment, of what kind soever, seemeth evidently to have arisen from deliberate advice, consultation, and composition between men, judging it convenient and behoveful; there being no impossibility in nature, considered by itself, but that men might have lived without any public regiment." *Eccl. Polit.* i. He also speaks of "times wherein there was as yet no manner of public regiment." *Ib.* It is also distinctly laid down in the *Parliamentary Declaration* of 1648: "They (the parliament) suppose it will not be denied that the first institution of the office of a king in this nation was by agreement of the people, who chose one to that office for the protection and good of them who chose him, and for their better government, according to such laws as they did consent unto." Tr.]

[r] *De Cive*, v. 6. Submissio voluntatum omnium unius voluntati.

the ruler, all private will is at once submitted to him.—He is in no wise bound by the laws which the others may prescribe—he unites in himself the supreme executive and legislative authority[s], and is therefore in every way absolute, inviolable, and irresponsible.—Moreover, the power which has been granted to him cannot ever be revoked, for as soon as the nation has transferred this, it no longer constitutes what, morally speaking, may be termed one person, but exists only as an aggregate of individuals.

It is true that the original act may have settled the sovereignty either upon one man, or upon a certain number, or even on the greater part of the people. And thus Hobbes would not by his theory exclude either an aristocracy or a democracy, provided either of these forms were pure and absolute. But then he wished also to prove that a monarchy is far preferable to the other two, and thus he became its advocate, not only generally, but in its most unlimited character of despotism. Mixed constitutions he held to be *ipso facto* absurd, since they imply the division of the sovereignty, which, according to him, is a contradiction of terms.

These are the principal opinions of Hobbes, who may without doubt claim to be considered as the founder of political speculation in modern times—none of his predecessors had treated the

[s] Imperium absolutum, *De Cive*, vi. 13. Hobbes has no general term for the executive power, he characterises it according to particular acts of the government.

subject with so much acuteness and power of reasoning. He rose above common experience, and having once established his theory of a state, he guarded it well about. His system rested upon these three positions: 1st. The supreme power is indivisible: 2nd. The supreme power may be transferred: 3rd. When transferred its unity must be maintained.

The converse of the second of these (viz.) that the supreme power is intransferable, was at a later period advanced by Rosseau, who was thus unavoidably led to consider a democracy as the only just form of government. Hobbes, on the other hand, attained by his view to the most unlimited monarchy and aristocracy, without, as we have said, wholly excluding democracy. The only condition on which he insisted, was that the form, whatever that might be, should be simple and unrestricted.

The high character which belongs to Hobbes among the political writers of his day, might lead us to expect that he should have acquired great practical influence. This, however, was not the case; and it may partly be accounted for by the fact, that the constitution of his own country was formed upon wholly different principles from those which he advocated. But even among the supporters of absolute kingly power, he was not usually appealed to as their best defence. Filmer, whom we have before spoken of, although immeasurably inferior to Hobbes, yet attained to much greater

authority; in fact, he was singled out by the best champions of the opposite party as the worthier enemy of the two. The reason of this appears to be, that Filmer's work was in much better accordance with the prevailing spirit of the time than that of Hobbes. The latter so far excelled his age in method and power of abstract reasoning, as to stand alone and unappreciated. Again, Filmer had interwoven religion with his politics, and quoted the Bible for examples and authority; and as this was then the prevalent tone, we can understand how his solemn trifling came to attract more attention than the philosophical arguments of Hobbes.

It would be superfluous to dwell upon other and less known writers, who came forward in support of absolute power, as the theory of politics was very little advanced by them; and it is far from my intention to give a literary history of the science. I prefer passing at once to the *advocates of free constitutions* who appeared at this time in England; and among these more especially to Algernon Sidney, and John Locke. Both had for their immediate object a reply to Filmer, but neither was content with his discomfiture. Algernon Sidney[t] was one of those characters which the disturbances of a revolution are so apt to produce. From his earliest youth he was an enthusiastic adorer of republi-

[t] He was born 1622, and beheaded 1683, on a charge of high treason, which could not be substantiated. Under William III. this judgment was reversed, and his innocence solemnly acknowledged.

can freedom; and the circumstances amidst which he lived, served amply to encourage a spirit which persecution only confirmed. For many years he wandered in exile, and when at length he returned to his native country, it was to be condemned without cause, and die upon the scaffold. His own often rehearsed motto,

> Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
> Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem;

gives a truer history of his opinions and character than any longer story could tell.

Sidney wrote his famous "Discourses on Government" in answer to Filmer, and this polemical design teaches us at once that we are not to expect from them a regular system of politics. Moreover, he had no natural turn for speculative pursuits; and his philosophy of government consisted in a few favourite maxims, which he sought to prove alternately by abstract reasoning and reference to history. The first position of Filmer's which he attacked, was that in which he deduced the kingly power from God. He argued that so far from this, God had committed the choice of their government entirely to mankind. It is, therefore, in strict accordance with nature, that nations should rule themselves, or at least choose their own rulers.

All "magistratical power" then, if rightly derived, must be derived from the people; and the government must be instituted with a view to the advantage of the governed, and not of the

governors. The amount of power which is entrusted to the magistracy, depends upon the people who make that trust: and as every nation has a right to establish its own form of government, so every nation has a right to alter or do it away at will. It is clear that these principles would admit of a monarchy as well as of a constitution; but although their author does not wholly reject the monarchical form, he takes no trouble to conceal his preference of republicanism, the advantages of which he endeavours, often feebly enough, to prove. It is evident from this short abstract, that the theory of government gained very little at the hands of Sidney. He ranks, however, among the most spirited defenders of liberty, and his unjust fate has rendered his memory sacred. With regard to his work, which could only be published after his death, in the reign of William III., we may fairly say that his name has done more for it than it has done for his name; it never has been forgotten, but it has never taken a place among the classics of his country. This indeed the form of it would not permit, for while its polemical interest necessarily expired with the short lived reputation of Filmer, there was nothing in the vagueness and unphilosophical arrangement of its parts which could supply the deficiency.

If Algernon Sidney then *did* contribute, and assuredly he did, to awaken a spirit of freedom among his countrymen, it was rather by his life

and death than by any thing that ever came from his pen.

John Locke[u], of whom we have now to speak, requires a very different notice. He is to be reckoned among those who have acquired, and still continue to exercise, a great national influence; for whatever opinion we may entertain of his powers of thought, it is undeniable that to him England chiefly owes the direction of its philosophical pursuits.

Those of his writings with which we have here to do, are his two treatises of government[x]. The first of these, as its title denotes, was in answer to Filmer; but the second goes further, and being an attempt to establish the general theory of government, bears more directly upon our subject.

In it Locke proceeds, as Hobbes had done, from "the state of nature;" but the vagueness which we before attributed to the idea of such a state, is at once shown by the very different picture which he gives of it from that sketched by Hobbes. The latter had asserted that, in "the state of nature" every man was in continual warfare with his neighbour. Locke, on the other hand, imposes upon men in this state a natural law, by which they are bound alike to

[u] He was born 1632, spent a portion of his life abroad, especially in France, and died 1704.

[x] Two treatises of government. In the former, the false principles and foundation of Sir Robert Filmer, bart., and his followers, are detected and overthrown. The latter is an essay concerning the true original extent and end of civil government.

provide for their own safety, and to abstain from injuring that of others. By the same law, persons who may have suffered injury are permitted to exert themselves in self-defence, and to retaliate so far as at once to procure reparation to themselves and to prevent the aggressors from any renewal of their attacks. In spite, therefore, of his own doctrine, with which he combats Filmer and Hobbes, that all men in the state of nature are free and equal, he allots to every one a degree of power over his neighbour sufficient to punish the transgressors of the natural law, and thus to maintain its authority.

This view of the state of nature reduces it to a condition in which men are under no government but that of reason. Such a condition may certainly be *imagined,* but until men learn to shake off the passions, which at present hold a divided sway with reason, and become wholly devoted to the latter, it can never be realized. While if it were, we may ask what necessity there would then be for any government at all? That it would be necessary, however, Locke declares, and that because where every man is judge in his own cause, it is impossible that he should act without being prejudiced by his own interest.

The most important advantage which resulted from the enquiries of Locke, was the assertion of universal freedom and equality as the birthright of mankind, in opposition to the tenets of Filmer and his followers with respect to the

dependence, and even slavery, which they held to emanate from the paternal authority. Locke therefore was the first who advanced the doctrine of the natural rights of man, in as far as these are maintained by personal freedom, and the security of property, which he was at much more pains to define and establish than any of his predecessors had been.

As Locke made the state of civil society to proceed from that of nature, by the act of surrender, according to which every man resigned his individual right of punishing the violators of the natural law into the hands of a public and acknowledged officer; it follows, of course, that the constituents of a state should be all free men, and that personal freedom should be an essential condition of the union. Locke, however, was not content with this, for the whole tenor of his work is directed to show that the British constitution is strictly in conformity with the general principles of government, and therefore a just and reasonable form. He thus introduces, beyond the personal freedom on which he openly insists, the condition of political freedom, or participation in the legislature. The origin of a state presupposes the voluntary agreement of all those who are to become members of it; these, by uniting themselves, form a political body; and this body must be directed by the will of the majority, or else remain inefficient. As each individual, therefore, must submit his own opinion to that of the majority, which

thus becomes the *legislative power*, this power is supreme, whether the constitution be of one kind or another, whether the power be transferred into the hands of many or of a few. It must, however, be distinguished from the *executive*, which is subordinate to the other, and has for its object the observance and fulfilment of the laws.

In pursuing this scheme Locke was led to enquire more particularly into the distinction between the legislative and executive powers, and the principles which he thus established, form another and essential cause of gratitude to him as a political theorist. No writer before him had so distinctly separated these elements of a constitution from each other, or ascertained so closely both their several characters and mutual relation. But whilst he was busied in claiming a superiority for the legislative over the executive, and in securing the exercise of it either wholly, or in part at least, to the people or their representatives, he was thus gradually preparing his way to the maxim, that *no constitution is to be considered a right one in which the legislative and the executive powers are not lodged in different hands.* In an unlimited monarchy, therefore, where the two powers are united in the ruler without control, the proper relations cannot be established, and the prince is to be regarded as occupying the same position towards his subjects as that which every man held towards his neighbour in the state of nature.

This development of the doctrine of a distinction of powers in the state, was absolutely necessary to complete the theory of government, and Locke cannot be denied great merit for accomplishing it, as well as for pointing out the advantages of a free constitution. He thus prepared the ground which subsequent writers, however little they otherwise agreed with him in principle, yet made use of to establish their own. But then, on the other hand, he did not foresee the consequences to which his doctrines might lead; for although there can be no doubt that the legislative and executive powers ought to be *considered as separate in theory*, yet how far they ought to be *separated in practice*, is a wholly different question.

An entire separation of the two in practical politics can never be accomplished—nor indeed did Locke ever intend it—he assigned the prince a share in the legislative, and thus differed from Hobbes by admitting a mixed constitution, while the latter rejected all division of the sovereignty, and admitted only the pure forms. Notwithstanding this, however, the theoretical distinction of these elements led to the maxim that they ought to be separated as *much as possible* in practice; and thus the way was opened to most serious errors. Subsequent experience has unfortunately shown that anxiety on this point is any thing but unfounded, and if we examine the evils which have resulted from it, we shall be obliged to confess, that no theory ever

produced so much mischief by being misunderstood as this.

As far as England was concerned, however, the principles of Locke needed no qualification, and we can easily understand how they should become the text book of the nation. That separation of the executive and legislative powers which he required, was here in force, for although the king had a share of the latter, it was yet essentially in the hands of the parliament. Those maxims which were considered by the people as most sacred and most important, viz. that no taxes should be imposed except with the consent of their representatives, that all men's rights were equal in the eye of the law, and the like, were definitely expressed by Locke; and thus his theory corresponded in all its essential points with what actually existed. This accordance alone would have secured Locke a very great authority; but besides this he was acknowledged as the first philosopher, and one of the most classical writers which the nation possessed; and his work thus became current, if not among the mass of the people, at least among the well informed and educated part of it. There were other circumstances also which tended to spread his influence, and especially the fact that several of the most eminent *practical statesmen* of Great Britain, we need only mention Chatham as one—recognised his principles upon every occasion in parliament; and

thus added to his character for abstract philosophy that of the surest practical discernment.

The general consent of a great and intelligent nation, which has produced so many of the most profound philosophers and ablest statesmen, is always entitled to our attention; nor have we the remotest wish to take from the undoubted merits of Locke: but we may observe that the almost blind respect which was paid to him, has been one of the causes of that abatement in the study of political science, which to a certain degree still continues.—To argue against Locke has been considered as an infallible proof of disaffection to the constitution.

Nevertheless, England has since his time had many political writers, and those of the first order, but their pursuits have received a different direction, and have been changed from enquiries as to the rights and forms of government, into questions of political economy.—Men's opinions on constitutional points, as far as these are practically concerned, have become settled, partly by the constitution under which they live, and partly by the writings of Locke. On the other hand, the more evident relations of government and the new wants which have been continually arising, were calculated to draw general attention to political economy. And as under the Stuarts the theory of government owed its rise to the revolutionary times immediately preceding, so the circum-

stances of later days naturally led to the theories of political economy. It does not belong to our plan to mention the great writers who have appeared in this department. From them Europe has gained its whole knowledge of the science, and their influence, far from diminishing, must continue to increase.

However highly we may estimate the services which Locke rendered to the science of civil government, it was unavoidable that a theory which had reference only to one particular state, should be partial and incomplete. This will be at once evident if we apply his principles to other countries, which we are, to a certain degree, accustomed to consider among the best governed of Europe.

According to him, none of those states in which the power of the prince is unlimited, *i.* e. in which the legislative and executive powers are united in his person—admit of any approach to civil society, properly so called—in fact, they present nothing but slavery. These expressions must of course be taken with some degree of latitude, but the theory which seeks to confine the idea of a state within such narrow limits, cannot be reconciled with actual history.

If states, such as Denmark and Prussia, are not even to deserve the name of states, if their constitutions are not for a moment to be considered rightful constitutions, we must be allowed to suspect, that the fault lies rather in the theorists, than in the states themselves. And

so in truth it does; Locke, like all his predecessors, and his successors down to Kant, adopted for his foundation the division into monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. But as long as this division prevails, no theory which is founded upon it can be secure. And one of the chief reasons of this is, that the important distinction between unlimited monarchy, as far as this results from the union of the two powers, or as it is better termed autocracy, and despotism, cannot be drawn. Hence these two forms, although essentially different, are continually mistaken for each other[y].

While outward circumstances were thus advancing the theory of politics in England, Geneva presented a similar, and yet a very different appearance. This small state deserves to be reckoned among the most remarkable in Europe, and from its immense influence upon the practice of politics attracts the attention of the historian more than many other states which far exceed it in size. From a curious assemblage of circumstances, speculation on the science of government attained to a degree of vigour here, which was not equalled in any other part of Europe, and which at once produced its consequences—some cheering and beneficial; others, alas! dangerous and destructive.

The names of Calvin, and Servetus, of Vol-

[y] In order to avoid repetition I must refer my reader to what I have said on this subject, in my Historical Researches, *African Nations*, vol. ii. App. IV. p. 413, of the English translation.

taire, of Rousseau, and Necker, bring a throng of recollections to the mind; but in order to obtain a full view of the subject with which they are connected, we must bestow a passing glance upon the position and history of Geneva itself.

The geographical situation of this town undoubtedly contributed to produce a collision of ideas, such as could not easily take place elsewhere. Placed upon the borders of France, Italy, and Switzerland, it enjoyed a degree of intellectual prosperity to which each of the neighbouring states contributed its share. Still, however, the peculiar character of Geneva was determined by the development of its internal relations. To this the reformation mainly contributed—for on their conversion to its principles, the Genevese (1533) expelled the bishops, who had till then been, in a certain degree, their rulers; although, as in other places, a municipal constitution had gradually been formed to restrain them. From that time Geneva maintained its independence, notwithstanding the attempts of the princes of Savoy: and the goods of the clergy, which had been confiscated, were applied to the foundation of that university, which has since reckoned so many distinguished men among its members. In the mean time, it was reserved for John Calvin, who established himself here as a reformer, to enable Geneva, by his single efforts, to turn the reformation to such account, as regarded its political importance, as

could never have been hoped for without his assistance.

This extraordinary personage, a Frenchman by birth, and as much endowed with vigour and activity as he was furnished with learning, was chosen to fill the professor's chair; and not only acquired great political importance by the influence which the rigid church discipline, established by him at the reformation, secured to himself and to the clergy, but became, as a *general* reformer, the head of that party which took its name from him.

Of this party Geneva naturally became the chief resort, and from it they spread themselves in all directions, and especially towards France, where, under the name of Hugonots, they caused disturbances from which the most sanguinary civil wars took their rise. But, besides the presence of Calvin, there was another reason for the religious importance of Geneva, and one of a more enduring character.

The new doctrines were nowhere else taught in the French tongue; and thus Geneva necessarily became the school of the French reformed clergy, and, by extending its sphere, involved itself more deeply in general politics.

To these circumstances Geneva was considerably indebted for the features which so peculiarly distinguished it—but not to these alone.—The manner in which its internal relations were established was of no less influence. In the same year as that in which Calvin settled at Geneva

(1536), a change was wrought in the constitution of this state upon which its future character depended. The municipal constitution, as far as it had been formed under the bishops, was purely democratical. The citizens' assembly (Conseil general), which included every householder who enjoyed the rights of citizenship, deliberated upon all important matters, and elected annually, from its own members, four chief officers, or syndics, who were obliged to give an account of their proceedings to the assembly. To these syndics it had, for a considerable time, become customary to join assessors, whose number had gradually been increased to twenty-five, and the body thus formed was called the smaller council, (Petit conseil.) Causes which will not admit of being historically proved had induced the addition of other assessors to the smaller council. The number of these was (in 1526) fixed at two hundred, but afterwards amounted to two hundred and fifty; and thus the great council (Grand[z] conseil) was formed, in which the smaller council had seats and voices, and of which it formed the select committee.

It was naturally to be expected that when the bishops were expelled, and the state thus became wholly free, these institutions should not only be preserved, but should acquire a much greater importance than before. Up to that time how-

[z] We must not confound the great council (Grand conseil) with the Conseil general, or citizens' assembly.

ever, the members of both councils, as well as as the syndics, were annually chosen by the citizens' assembly, and could, therefore, be only considered as delegates of the latter.

But in the year 1536, at a moment when general attention was fully occupied by matters of religion, it was carried, *that the two councils, the great and the small, should re-elect themselves annually,* subject, however, to an enquiry into the conduct of their members.

It was very difficult at that time for the citizens to perceive the consequences of such changes: they could not, however, but show themselves. In the midst of a democracy the seeds of an aristocracy had been sown, the growth and prosperity of which there was scarce any thing left to control.

The two councils had a common interest; they naturally became permanent bodies—naturally I say, for what could be more natural than that the annual election should, when it was thus left to themselves, become an empty form? A slight acquaintance with the course of affairs in small states will tell us, moreover, that this aristocracy could not avoid becoming an aristocracy of particular families. Meanwhile, however, it lasted for a considerable time without becoming a cause of dissension; and for that reason was able to establish itself the more firmly. The continued attempts of the dukes of Savoy to subdue Geneva also contributed to divert the attention of the citizens, and at the

same time to create a spirit of unity, which the last ineffectual effort in 1602, the well known *escalade*, served greatly to confirm.

While there was yet no great disparity of possessions, while strangers were freely admitted to the full rights of citizenship, and while those connections were kept up between the upper and lower classes which were established by sponsorship, (a tie which may not unaptly be compared to the *patronage* of the Romans,) disturbances were not much to be feared. But all this became changed, when at the revocation of the edict of Nantes (1685), a host of Hugonots fled from France to Geneva. From that time the rights of citizenship began to be more sparingly imparted, and the Genevese formed themselves into distinct classes by the separation, among the citizens themselves, of the "*Citoyens*," or elder citizens, (whose family had possessed that right for four generations,) from the new citizens, or "*Bourgeois*," and among the mere inhabitants, of the "*Habitans*" from the after settlers or "*Natifs*:" and with this distinction of classes arose also a distinction of rights. The new trades which the refugees imported with them, produced a great increase of wealth; and men's minds became more at leisure for the consideration of political questions. In 1707 the contest between the aristocracy and the democracy fairly commenced, and was from time to time renewed in a manner which furnishes the most instructive commentary on the struggles of the patricians

and plebeians in Rome, with which it agreed as well in other points, as in the fate of its martyrs—its Fatio, Micheli, and others. The historical details of these events do not belong to our plan, but it is well worthy of attention that they frequently arose upon questions closely connected with the theory of politics, which was then assuming a new form.

In none of the other and larger states of Europe were those difficult points, regarding the sovereignty of the people, the limits between the legislative and the executive, and so forth, discussed so practically as in Geneva.—It presented the curious spectacle of a small, almost the smallest free state of Europe, preserving in the midst of the great monarchies by which it was surrounded, so striking a resemblance to the republics of antiquity, as to furnish a commentary on them, such as the whole continent besides could not supply. But there is another point on account of which it is still more remarkable, viz. the interference of several of the greater states, especially of France, with its internal affairs, and the manner in which that interference was conducted. Almost all the ministers who had charge of the foreign affairs of France—Fleury and Choiseul under Louis XV.—Vergunes and Necker under Louis XVI.—took a very great and active interest in the politics of Geneva; but notwithstanding the immense disparity of strength, their interference was always cautious and respectful, to a degree which could have

been *necessary* only towards a much more important state. And even when, in extreme cases, it became unavoidable for the support of one or other of the parties, that troops should be advanced upon Geneva, still its independence was never violated. Indeed the eighteenth century may claim as a phenomenon peculiarly its own, the instance of an army furnished by three powers, France, Sardinia, and Switzerland, and assembled before the gates of a town, not for the purposes of conquest, but solely with a view of restoring by its presence the tranquillity of the town itself. No political system which has not for its foundation a sacred respect for property and a desire to maintain the balance of power can present such scenes!

Whilst these repeated disturbances, and the cautious interference of the great powers which they produced, gave to Geneva an importance in the eyes of Europe which no other state of the same rank could boast, they were also the cause of its becoming the central point of speculations on the theory of government. It affords a striking example of the power which the freedom of a republican constitution possesses to awaken a spirit of general enquiry, while it at the same time shows that the spirit thus roused will naturally attach itself to the subject of politics, should these lie more immediately within its reach.

But besides its form of government Geneva had another advantage in the identity of its language, with that of France. By this means it

derived full benefit from every step which the latter made: all the new ideas which arose in France obtained immediate circulation there. And thus, before we come to "the citizen of Geneva," whose influence on the theory of politics was so extensive, we must first cast a glance upon the progress which speculations of this nature had made in France.

The age of Louis XIV. had not been by any means favourable to them, but under his successors they had fairer scope. The spirit of the nation received a sudden impulse from the hand of one, who in respect of the attention which he excited, became to the French what Locke was to the English. He and Locke, however, held such different views with regard to the existing constitutions of their own countries that this is the only point on which a comparison will hold.

Before Montesquieu, the French nation possessed no writer on political subjects whom they esteemed sufficiently to consider an authority; but no sooner had the "Esprit des Loix"[a] appeared, than it obtained so great an influence as to render all attacks upon it ineffectual except in furthering its success. In these days, however, we may ask what the real worth of this book is, and what has been effected by it?

The whole of Montesquieu's work *emanated from the study of history.* It is true that he does not deserve the praise of having earned by these studies the name of a general historian: they

[a] It was first published in 1748.

were too confined for that. He had studied the history of Rome deeply, that of Greece with much less attention; of that of the other nations of antiquity he knew hardly any thing. His acquaintance with the east, a quarter full of importance to his enquiries, was confined to what a few books of travels could supply. Of the histories of the middle and modern ages, those of France had interested him most, those of Germany and England next. The limits of his historical studies were therefore extremely narrow; but yet they embraced that diversity which was requisite for his purpose; and, moreover, he had pursued these studies in a spirit such as none of his predecessors could boast, not even Machiavel, who, as the founder of *practical* history among the moderns, might otherwise claim a place beside him.

The object of Montesquieu was to attain by the study of history to a knowledge of the very essence of states and political constitutions—to distinguish the peculiarities of each form; and thus to deduce maxims for the administration of the different branches of legislature under different constitutions.

His field was therefore of boundless extent and proportionate abundance; but then the subjects which it embraced possessed of themselves the highest practical interest, and had they been treated with only moderate ability, the first attempt on so large a scale could not have failed to attract the reader. How much more, then,

when they were in the hands of a man so gifted as Montesquieu! Indeed, interesting as we have declared the subjects to be of which he treats, it was not to them, but to his *manner of treating of them,* that his work owes the great and permanent sensation which it produced. The method which he adopted of giving no finished descriptions, but of only hinting as it were by outline: of never exhausting his subject, and yet of saying so much on it in so few words: of busying not only the reason by philosophical argument and definition, but the imagination by the pictures which he often substituted in their room—above all, those lightning flashes of genius which perhaps blind as often as they illustrate—all this was admirably calculated to secure him assent and admiration among a people such as his own.

His work contained inexhaustible *matter of thought* for those who wished to think; whilst those who were too indolent for such exertions might console themselves with the belief that they had gathered from it an abundance of *ready made thoughts,* and these of the brightest description.

This exuberance of genius, however, was unaccompanied by a *true philosophical spirit.* The mind of Montesquieu was well adapted for deriving shrewd remarks from experience; but for all matters of speculation, as far as that consists in the definition and distinction of abstract ideas, he was almost totally unfit—nay, he does not

even seem to have once felt the want of it! The very first pages of his work show, what has before been justly objected to him, that the author of the Spirit of the Laws was incapable of defining rightly what laws are; and it is evident throughout that he had not a clear notion of the first principles of the science of government. If any one should think these expressions unjust, he had better attempt to derive from Montesquieu's own words an idea of the essential character of the different kinds of government, of despotism, aristocracy, democracy, etc. This formed the very foundation of his scheme, and yet if we examine it, we shall not wonder at any uncertainty or weakness which we meet with in the superstructure [b].

[b] It was not without due consideration that I first published my opinion of a writer of such high authority, and one whose real merits I fully acknowledge. I repeat it now with greater confidence, as his last French reviewer has fully confirmed it, in his admirable work, *Commentaire Critique sur l'Esprit de Loix, par* Le Comte Destuth De Tracy, 1812; translated, with notes, by professor Morstadt, *Heidelberg*, 1820.

The French translator of this treatise, in my *Melanges Historiques*, Paris, 1820, has endeavoured to soften down this criticism, by stating in his note, what I am most ready to admit, viz. That I have only considered the state of science, and not the circumstances of the time. These, however, do not appear to me to have much to do with an opinion as to the progress of the theory.

[The following passage is the first sentence in Montesquieu's 'Spirit of Laws:'—"Les loix dans la signification la plus étendue, sont les rapports nécessaires qui dérivent de la nature des choses: et dans ce sens tous les êtres ont leur loix; la Divinité a ses loix, le monde matériel a ses loix, les intelligences supérieures à l'homme ont leurs loix, les bêtes ont leur loix, l'homme a ses loix." Now, objects widely different, though bearing a common name, are here blended and confounded. Of the laws which govern the conduct of intelligent and rational animals, some are laws imperative and proper, and others are closely analogous to laws of that de-

But although the general theory of government gained so little from Montesquieu, although his whole work could pretend to be nothing more than an *assemblage of maxims*, the justness and applicability of which it was left to the reader to determine, it did not on that account work less effectually. It contained, in the first place, an inexhaustible treasure for the practical study of history; and although there are many single opinions and assertions in which we may not agree with Montesquieu, yet his labours served sufficiently to point out the advantages which might be derived from the study of history, as well as the manner in which these pursuits should be directed in order to attain them. Besides this, it derived great influence upon the spirit and way of thinking of the people of France, from the occurrences of the time at which it appeared. During the regency of

scription. But the so called laws which govern the material world, with the so called laws which govern the lower animals, are merely laws by a metaphor. And the so called laws which govern or determine the Deity, are clearly in the same predicament. If his notions were governed and determined by laws imperative and proper, he would be in a state of dependence on another and superior being. When we say that the actions of the Deity are governed or determined by laws, we mean that they conform to intentions which the Deity himself has conceived, and which he pursues or observes with inflexible steadiness or constancy. To mix these figurative laws with laws imperative and proper, is to obscure, and not to elucidate, the nature or essence of the latter. The beginning of the passage is worthy of the sequel. We are told that laws are the necessary relations which flow from the nature of things. But what, I would crave, are relations? What, I would also crave, is the nature of things? And how do the necessary relations which flow from the nature of things differ from those relations which originate in other sources? The terms of the definition are incomparably more obscure than the term which it affects to expound." AUSTIN, *on Jurisprudence*, p. 191. TR.]

the duke of Orleans, as well as after the succession of Louis XV., the most shameless corruption pervaded the whole government; the main cause of this was usually held to be the systematic suppression of the national freedom, the remains of which were occasionally perceptible in the struggles with the parliament; while it ought, with much more truth, to have been attributed to the state of morality, especially among the higher orders, to which no constitutional forms could have offered an impediment. The favourite maxims of Montesquieu were thus readily appreciated by the spirit of the day—his unrestrained attachment to mixed constitutions, especially that of Great Britain, could not fail to procure him a host of supporters. He met public opinion half way—was it astonishing then that he should be received with so much applause?

The spirit of political discussion was fairly awakened by him among his countrymen, never again to be lulled to rest, and from that time forth legislation, and the best modes of adapting it to the end proposed, became one of the subjects to which thinking men chiefly turned their attention. Montesquieu, therefore, contributed largely towards including it in the subject-matter of philosophy, although his own enquiries proceeded from the study of history, and not from the philosophy of the day.

In fact, of all those men who were at first distinguished, as they are now branded, with the

name of philosophers, not one had attained to any eminence in France till long after Montesquieu had began to busy himself on his 'Spirit of Laws[c].'

With all the imperfections and deficiencies of his work, Montesquieu has the merit then of having directed men's enquiries into *the paths of experience.* From the diffusion of his principles reform indeed might have been expected, but not revolution; for although he was the enlightened supporter of a limited monarchical constitution, he had not on that account endeavoured —even in France—to shake the foundation upon which the existing order of things had for so long rested. He was far from desiring general political equality; on the contrary, he maintained that under a monarchy, the leading principle of which ought, according to him, to be *honour*, the existence of a nobility is requisite, to prevent despotism on the one hand, and the tyranny of the people on the other; nor did he ever reject the clergy as an estate of the realm, although he wished some restriction of their privileges, especially with regard to their *jurisdiction*[d]. If, therefore, the idea of *a monarchy limited by representation of the people,* became cherished by the greater part of the people of France, as the result of the first national assembly proved to be the case, this must be mainly attributed, next

[c] According to his own account, Montesquieu was occupied for twenty years on that work. See the end of his preface.

[d] *Esprit des Loix,* ii. cap. 4.

to the example supplied by England, to the work of Montesquieu. That this very national assembly, however, far outwent the intentions of Montesquieu, by laying down the principle of universal political equality, need not, after what we have said, be any further insisted upon.

And this brings us back to the point from whence we started, viz. a review of the theorists of Geneva, and especially of him whose work became the text book of revolution. How far it was adapted to this purpose, how far the principles practically applied, were really contained in it, is a point well worth our determining. But in order to gain a just view of the "Contrat Social," we must first bestow a glance upon its origin.

The "Contrat Social" originated in a manner directly contrary to the "Esprit des Loix"—the latter was the result of experience, supplied by the study of history; the former was the product of *pure speculation*, which Rousseau had been led to apply to politics from his earlier enquiries as to the *origin of a disparity* among mankind. Nevertheless, however abstract the studies of Rousseau may have been, it is very certain that the theory of government which he entertained, could have been entertained by none but "the *citizen of Geneva*;" not that the principles which he advocated were those which obtained a practical influence in Geneva, but if any speculative thinker had set himself to mould the opinions favoured by the democratical and

opposition party, into a political system, and to establish them upon philosophical grounds, such a work as the "Contrat Social" must inevitably have been the result. It requires a very slight acquaintance with this treatise to perceive that Rousseau had continually before his eyes a small and free state, as being, in fact, the only one in which his principles could, to their full extent, become applicable. We may therefore justly say, that had it not been for the political progress of Geneva, the "Contrat Social" would never have been written. While, on the other hand, the already great, although indirect, influence of this little republic upon the practical politics of Europe, became by it immense.

It was not Rousseau's design, as it was Montesquieu's, to produce a rich collection of political rules and maxims, scientifically arranged—he sought rather to *establish the general principles of government upon a philosophical foundation.* In accordance with the object of our present work, it must be shown how he accomplished this, and more especially, how, in so doing, he diverged from the paths of his predecessors, and was thus led off to a different conclusion.

Rousseau, although he differs from both Hobbes and Locke in his description of it, proceeds, like them, from a "state of nature," out of which he supposes men to have advanced into civil society by a *voluntary contract.* This contract, however, is not concluded between the people and their rulers, but between the different

members of the community itself, and must, as no man has a natural right over his fellow, be the result of unanimous agreement. This "pacte social" has no other object than to procure social institutions, under which the power of *all* may be exercised for the protection of the persons and property of *each*. *Each* individual, while he thus associates himself with *all*, being yet under the authority of none but himself, and thus as free as before. All the articles of the contract may be reduced to this one: that every man resigns himself and his rights, without reserve, to the society; or, in other words, that he puts himself and his person under the direction of the *will of the community*. In this manner the society forms itself into a *moral personage*, or a body which, as such, is entrusted with sovereignty, and becomes the sovereign. This sovereignty, however, is nothing but the exercise of the will of the community, and, as such, is not only intransferable, but also, as a natural consequence, indivisible.

But as the exercise of the will of the community is effected by legislation, *the legislative power* must of necessity be lodged with the people—*the people, then, is sovereign;* and, as its sovereignty is intransferable, can never cease to be so. This power cannot be exercised in any other way than by assemblies of the people, in which every man gives his vote, and the vote of every man is as good as that of his fellows. The idea of popular representatives as exercising

the sovereignty of the people is an absurdity, since that sovereignty, cannot be transferred. Representatives, so called, can be nothing more than agents, whose resolutions must be submitted to the people for ratification. When this social contract was established, all who took a part in it were free, and of equal rights. And the maintenance of this freedom, and this equality, is necessarily the object of all legislation, as without it society could not exist.

The equality here meant, however, does not require that all power, and all property, should be absolutely equal: but only that the power of no man shall be sufficient to commit violence; and that the wealth of none shall be so great as to enable them to buy others; the poverty of none such as to induce them to submit to being bought.

But as the state, in its corporate capacity, not only wills, but acts, there must be an *executive* as well as a *legislative* power. This requires *a government*, i. e. a body interposed between the sovereign and the subject[e]. This government, however, is nothing more than a *committee appointed by the sovereign people*, the establishment of which does not require, or even admit of, a mutual contract, inasmuch as it is in perpetual dependence on the sovereign power. As regards its constitution, it may consist of one, or more, or all; from which variety the three forms of

[e] That is, the people may be considered both as sovereign (inasmuch as they make laws), and as subject (inasmuch as they obey them). Sovereign and subject here apply to the same persons in two different relations.

monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy have arisen[t]—although the last of these, considered as an *executive* government, is an absurdity. On the whole it appears to be best that this power should be lodged in the hands of one; but then it is impossible that great monarchies should be well governed—and besides, an hereditary monarchy has very great disadvantages.

These are, according to Rousseau, the general grounds of all government. We shall now find little difficulty in remarking the points on which he differed from his predecessors, Hobbes and Locke.

With Hobbes, Rousseau agreed in founding political society upon a contract: but then Hobbes supposed this contract to be between the community and its own constituted authorities, and that it was a contract of *absolute submission*, by which it transferred the sovereignty without reserve. The original contract of Rousseau, on the other hand, was only between the individuals who by that act established civil society; between these, again, and the government there was not, nor could there be, any agreement, as it consists only of commissioners, deputed by

[t] Rousseau was, as far as I know, the first writer who felt, although he did not fully explain, the double meaning of the word democracy; viz. as signifying either *a form of constitution*, or *a form of government*.

I must refer, on this subject, to my treatise already mentioned. See above, p. 156, note [y].

As a *form of government* Rousseau considered, and rightly, that a democracy is absurd.

As a *form of constitution* it was precisely what he sought to establish.

the sovereign people. Thus the several routes of Hobbes and Rousseau separated at the first step, and that with no prospect of reuniting, as they were directed towards two opposite marks: that of Hobbes to unlimited monarchy, that of Rousseau to the absolute power of the people. The two are alike only in this point, that both tended to despotism, although Rousseau has the advantage in phrase, for the despotism of a mob, blinded by its own passions, may still retain the honourable title of liberty, while it is denied to the single tyranny advocated by Hobbes. It would be useless to pursue further our comparison between them, as their points of difference are sufficiently perceptible.

With Locke, Rousseau proceeded a few steps further before he separated from him. He asserted with him the original freedom and equality which the defenders of unlimited monarchy denied. And consequently he agreed with him also in making the social state to proceed from a contract among freemen.

Security of person and property was held by both to be the chief object of civil union. And they both agreed in considering the legislative power as peculiarly belonging to sovereignty—that sovereignty being by either ascribed to the people, or bulk of the society. But then, according to Locke, the sovereignty might be *transferred*—according to Rousseau it is *wholly intransferable*: according to Locke it might be *divided* among different parties—according to

Rousseau it must remain *undivided* in the hands of the people. At this point, then, the two paths separate, and it is easy to see the conclusion to which that of either necessarily led—Locke arrived at the *Representative System* and a *limited Monarchy*, by the union of which the legislative power, although partially shared by the prince, is mainly in the hands of the representatives of the people: Rousseau could not, according to his principles, admit any form but *pure Democracy*, as far as that consists in the legislative functions being exercised by the whole body of the people without any transfer to representatives, or any participation of other powers in the government.

I trust that these observations will suffice to explain the chief points which characterise the several political systems which we have examined, and to distinguish them from each other. All that can be accomplished by pure speculation towards laying the foundations of civil society, and determining the best methods for its constitution appears to have been achieved by these three authors. Hobbes and Rousseau take their place at either extreme—the one in support of the total transfer of the sovereignty into the hands of the regent—the other to assert that the sovereignty is wholly intransferable by the people whose right it is—whilst Locke holds a middle course between the two.

It remains that we should consider these sys-

tems, especially that of Rousseau, with regard to their *practical application.*

They all three proceed from a *contract,* which, as founded on the supposition that it was framed by a people who never, till then, had constituted a state, neither has, nor ever could have taken place. All the three, then, thus at once forsook reality, and struck into paths which threatened new dangers at every step which carried them away from it. The political principles of Hobbes were, however, less exposed than those of the other two, because the absolute power which he sought to establish upon rightful grounds, cares little for such support, and can maintain itself without it. Moreover, the course of events in his own country deprived them alike of authority and of practical adoption there.

The doctrines of Locke, on the contrary, had for the most part been already applied in England, and only had the effect of supplying other countries with philosophical reasons for that attachment to the British constitution which had become almost universal throughout Europe previous to the late revolutions. As a contrast to this, the system of Rousseau floated like Aristophanes' City of the Birds, free and without support in the air. For while Rousseau asserts that the *will of the community* is always just, and has for its object the general good of the community, he is undoubtedly right that the common will, as far as it is the result of pure reason, will be directed towards that which is best for the com-

munity. But then, this *common will* must remain to all practical purposes an empty vision unless it has some *organ* by which it may be clearly and surely expressed. This Rousseau would have done by the voice of the assembled people itself, but he neither can, nor does deny that this method is often fallacious, or, to use his own words, that the will of *all* does not always express the common will. The people may be often deceived and led astray, and Rousseau knows no expedient against it, except—that we ought to be on our guard [g].

None, then, of these metaphysical speculations on government can be said to have done much for the practical application of the science. But even if we were disposed to agree with Rousseau as to the organ by which the *common will* is to be expressed, no great harm would be done, for his system could not possibly take effect in a state of any considerable size. By denying all transfer of the sovereign will to representatives, he requires, at the outset, that there should be general assemblies of the people which must be convened upon every occasion; and it is easy to see that, however readily this might be accomplished in small towns and their adjacent territory, it would be wholly out of the question in larger states—nay, Rousseau himself declares that these can only be formed by federations of the smaller. If, therefore, that party in France, which looked upon his writings as their standard,

[g] This important chapter is to be found in the *Contrat Social*, ii. 3.

had wished to act consistently, there can be no doubt of what his fate would have been had he been then alive. As an opponent of the representative system, which they established to its full extent, and as a supporter of federative republics, which according to their principles was a capital crime, he would have been doubly destined to the guillotine!

Nevertheless, Rousseau's influence upon the revolution was incalculably great; not in the sense of his being the originator of it, for that would be a short-sighted view, but inasmuch as the *direction* which the revolution took, was in a great measure determined by him. Some great name, some high authority was required; several of his ideas were, therefore, taken up—that of the sovereignty of the people—of general freedom and equality—and that of the greatest possible separation of the legislative and executive powers—and were made the foundations of the new system. It was no doubt Rousseau, who first expanded and perfected these notions, although he did not originally propose them; but even if he had desired the total overthrow of existing things in order to establish his own system, (and there is no reason to accuse him of such a wish), he would never have tolerated a *partial* application of it. This was to *abuse* not to *use*, and it would be unjust therefore to make him answerable for it.

Nevertheless, however willing we may be to acquit Rousseau of any design of causing revo-

lutions, yet it cannot be denied that not only those which Europe has experienced since his time, but those which threaten it still, may be traced to the principal maxim upon which his system rests.

This maxim is the sovereignty of the people. The danger with which it threatened the practice of politics did not, however, consist in the maxim itself, for the *sovereignty may doubtless be in the hands of the people.* It was rather in Rousseau's belief that this *sovereignty may be associated with monarchy.* The boundary line between monarchy and republicanism was thus wholly effaced, and the way prepared to errors for which Europe has already in part atoned, and still atones most dearly. It might surely have been thought that after the science of government had been treated of for centuries, after it had been laid down upon every occasion, that monarchy and republicanism are forms of government in direct opposition to each other, it might have been thought, I say, that the peculiar character of each would have been fully understood, and their limits distinctly marked—but when a philosopher, such as Rousseau, either does not know, or pays no attention to this; when the practical policy of whole nations, and of their representatives, is carried on without any respect to it,—we have a right to conclude that either these lines have never been clearly drawn, or (which amounts to the same thing in practice) that they have in time become forgotten.

And yet there could not be a moment at which such an error would be more fatal than the present. We have no longer to consider mere speculation and theory, the question which concerns us is one of fearful practical importance.

Europe, after having apparently escaped from the dangers of democracy, is on the verge of seeing either monarchical republics, or republics under the name of monarchies, occupying the chief places among her states. I hold these to be more formidable dangers even than those from which she has escaped. Of the comparative advantages of monarchies and republics nothing general can be asserted. It is possible to live happily or unhappily in either, according to the turn which events may take. But we may be sure that a nation (with individuals we have nothing to do) can never be happy in a pseudo-monarchy or a pseudo-republic, because such a form of government is contradictory to itself.—The history of Poland, as it was, affords at once a warning and an example!

We wish, therefore, either for *actual* monarchies, or *actual* republics. Now the European political system has been for centuries monarchical. All the chief states received the name of monarchies, and were so in reality.

The free states belonging to it were of the second or third rank. Nothing, therefore, short of the most violent revolutions could be supposed capable of changing this character into its opposite.

What, then, is the boundary between the two? We know only one, and that must be determined by *the possession of the sovereignty or chief power.* The essential distinction of monarchy consists in this being held by the prince—that of a republic in its being possessed by the people, or a certain portion of them. A republic, as well as a monarchy, has but one chief officer, but then the relation in which this officer stands to the people is very different in the two —in a monarchy he is *above,* in a republic he is *below,* the people. In the former he is[h] prince, or sovereign, (whatever title he may bear;) in the latter he is magistrate. Common parlance, which is generally the echo of sound reason, has long drawn this distinction; it is only by the sophisms of theorists that it became confused. The kings of France and England have the name of sovereigns, and are so. The president of America and the landammann of Switzerland neither receive the title, nor are they sovereigns.

But this *"holding of power over the people," this sovereignty of monarchs,* what does it, and

[h] It would appear, however, that we have authority against us on this point in Frederick the Great, who called himself "a Servant of the State, who had his duty to perform like others."—Nevertheless, Frederick was undoubtedly master in his dominion, and it is impossible to be at once master and servant. Had he chosen to follow out this idea, the truth, and the falsehood contained in it, would have been easily shown.

He was no doubt a servant in a moral sense of the word, since, as a man, he was subject to the law of conscience, which obliges alike princes and servants to do their duty; but in a political sense he was not so, as he did not serve the state but rule it. For the rest, Frederick knew very well the distinction between himself as king, and Washington as president.

what does it not essentially imply? For it is only by an accurate answer to this question that we can determine what is essentially necessary to the support of the monarchical principle in existing states.

It implies, in the first place, that the prince should possess his dignity independently of the people: in other words, that the crown should be *hereditary* and *inviolable*. Elective kingdoms, where the election is only in favour of the individual, and not of his heirs, are not true monarchies. Whoever is chosen merely as regards his own person, is by the very act of his election subjected to the people, whatever prerogatives may be formally assigned to him.—Whoever is chosen merely as regards his own person, may also be deposed by his electors, however differently it may stand upon paper.

It is otherwise with those who are elected to an hereditary crown.

Such cases may occur by the actual extinction of the reigning house, by abdication, and so forth, where there is no one who has an hereditary claim. There are accidents which no human power or wisdom can prevent, and on the occurrence of which, the best means which present themselves must be adopted, and thus election is often the only, or at least, the most reasonable expedient. But then, if the power bestowed by election, be made hereditary, the person who receives it is at once raised above the people or the electors, as the possession of the throne is

then no longer a prerogative of the person but of the dynasty. The name of elective monarchies has therefore been very justly restricted to those in which every vacancy of the throne is filled up by election. That such states are the most unhappily constituted, both as regards themselves and the other states with which they unite in forming a political system, the history of all times will show. Fortunately for Europe, elective monarchies have—with the exception of the papal government, the mode of election to which hardly entitles it to the name—entirely disappeared from its system; and with them the danger of those general wars with which the vacancy of the kingly throne of Poland, or the imperial one of Germany, was wont to threaten the continent.

The inviolability of the sovereign, i. e. the principle that he is not in person accountable, and cannot, therefore, be brought to punishment, is implied, as a matter of course, in true monarchies: for who in such monarchies *is able* to call him to account? But if this should be included as an article in any of our new constitutions, it would be either superfluous or absurd; superfluous in a true monarchy—absurd in a fictitious one, where the sovereignty is reserved to the people, for it would be a contradiction to exempt a delegate from being accountable to his superiors. Nor is it any secret that, notwithstanding all written declarations and assurances, there is always in such states a way open for

the deposition, imprisonment, and even execution of the prince.

The idea of sovereignty further implies, and that necessarily, *That in all affairs of the state, nothing shall be done either without or contrary to the will of the sovereign.* Where this is not the case, he ceases to be sovereign (supremus).

By this essential condition, which indeed results from the nature of the thing, we ascertain the relation in which, under constitutional monarchies, the sovereign must stand towards the people or their representatives; and we are enabled to draw the line of demarcation which must not be passed if the sovereign is to remain such.

Constitutional monarchies are those in which there is a *popular power*, generally called *the Chambers*, which represent the interests of the people in the councils of the prince, without, however, opposing his interests, as it is too customary to imagine they do—the interests of both being the same—viz. the prosperity of the state.

This power not only advises, but joins with the prince in deciding; still, however, it must be in some manner dependent upon him if he is to remain sovereign, and be a prince not in name only but in reality. Upon the relation, then, in which the prince stands to the chambers, the maintenance of the monarchical principle chiefly depends, and we must, therefore, consider what rights ought in this respect to be secured to him.

In speaking of the *Chambers* we here understand that both, or at least one of them, is to consist of deputies chosen by the people. It is doubtless more in favour of the throne that the assembly should consist of *two* chambers, one of which should be composed of members not chosen by the people, but possessing their seats either by right of birth or by appointment of the sovereign; but it cannot be shown that this is generally necessary. Sometimes, indeed, chambers of peers are neither necessary to the throne nor any support to it, nay, France has lately shown by example that a powerful opposition may be formed in them.

The division into two chambers affords greater security, however, against party decisions, and makes it more difficult for factions to be formed and their interests preferred to those of the state. It is necessary, however, that the two chambers should not have two interests, and that the members of the one should not possess any privileges which are burdensome to the other, for without this, unanimity cannot be expected between them.

The rights of the prince in his relation with the chambers, as far as these proceed from the definition of sovereignty, may be reduced into three classes, viz. Those which have reference to outward form—those which have reference to the subject matter on which his power is to be exerted—and those which regard the share which the prince is to take in the councils of

the nation, and the influence which he is to exercise over them.

As regards the *outward forms*, the idea of sovereignty requires that the chambers should be in strict subjection to the prince. These *outward forms* are the barriers which are to protect the crown from the inroads of the chambers. They should be determined by the charter of the constitution, and it should be incumbent on the prince to maintain them in full force.

The chambers are not to assemble without, or in opposition to, the will of the sovereign. They are to be opened by him, to be prorogued, and to be closed by him; and he must at all times possess the right of dissolving the existing chamber, and of calling for a new election of its members. When chambers assemble, prorogue, adjourn, and dissolve of their own authority, the assembly takes place at once *without* the will of the prince and will very soon be held in *opposition* to it. Again, a chamber which cannot be dissolved by the prince is independent, and superior to him. He has no means of escaping from its tyranny if it should form itself into a faction, and no opportunity of discovering whether it represents the wishes of its constituents, or stands in direct opposition to them. It is only by a new election that this can be certainly determined. It is requisite, therefore, not only for the interests of the prince, but for those of the people also, that he should have the power of dissolving the chamber of representatives.

In regard to the *subjects which are to be discussed by the chambers,* we may remark at once that all the foreign affairs of the state are to be beyond their jurisdiction, and appropriated to the prince. In treating with other states the prince must be considered as the representative of his own, otherwise they cannot deal with him with any safety; should it be done only "sub spe rati," they will no longer consider him as sovereign, but as the delegate of a superior power. The maintenance of the monarchical principle requires, therefore, according to our views, that not only all treaties of commerce and alliance, but that all declarations of war and conclusions of peace, should be absolutely in the hands of the prince. This, however, does not by any means exclude the chambers from debating upon foreign policy, and from giving their opinion either in praise or blame of the measures which the government may have adopted.

How far such proceedings may be advisable is a question with which we have nothing to do, as it does not bear upon the maintenance of the monarchical principle.

The sphere of the chambers, then, as a body, sharing the power of ultimate decision with the prince, is confined to the *internal affairs of legislation and taxation.* In these there is no third party concerned: but in the dealings between the two the monarchical principle is sustained by the *veto,* which must be allowed uncondition-

ally to the prince. In compliance with the favourite notion of the sovereignty of the people, frequent attempts have of late been made to restrict the *veto*, by determining that the prince may refuse his approval once, or even twice, but that after this the law shall be valid without it.

It is evident that this arrangement is wholly incompatible with the principle of monarchy, and, moreover, absurd in itself. It is incompatible with monarchy, because it assumes that a law may pass without the will of the sovereign. It is absurd, because there can be no reason why the monarchical principle should not rather be done away with at once, than after the lapse of two or three years.

There is no doubt that the use of the *veto* is an evil in each case to which it is applied, because it presumes that there is a difference between the prince and the chambers: but even though it should become, as in England, a mere form, it is yet important that the prince should possess the *right*, since circumstances may render it valuable.

It remains that we should consider the relations in which the prince stands to the chambers with respect to the *influence which he should exercise over them.* The monarchical principle requires that the prince should have the right of introducing measures into the chambers; he is to possess, in technical language, the right of the *initiative.* But the question which arises is, whether this right is to be confined to him alone,

whether he is to be the only source of legislation, or whether the members of the chambers are to be allowed a share in it?

Under the stipulation that the prince is to retain the power of approval or rejection, it does not appear necessary that the *initiative* should be wholly reserved to him; while to refuse it to the chambers would entail the contradiction of denying the representatives of the people all opportunity of expressing its wants. This object, however, may be obtained by requiring that the chambers should be obliged to sue the government under certain forms, for permission to introduce a measure, so that the latter only would retain the formal right. And this institution would possess the further advantage of throwing great obstacles in the way, if not of wholly preventing, all dissensions between the prince and the chambers. It is not, however, the object of this enquiry to ascertain what may best suit the peculiar circumstances of different nations.

If the monarchical principle requires that the prince should have the power of introducing measures into the chambers, it follows of course that he must also possess the means of convincing the chambers of the expediency and necessity of his proposals, and of inducing the adoption of them. He must, therefore, possess an influence in the chambers, since motions must be made in favour of these measures, and they must be supported in debate. This cannot

be better done than by the ministers who are the natural organ of the prince. The ministers, therefore, must have seats and voices in the chambers, whether as ministers or as elected members, does not matter. Nothing is more mistaken than the restriction of the ministers in the chambers, or their exclusion from them, in order, as it is said, to prevent the government influence from becoming too great. It is only from a false belief that the government and the chambers are in natural hostility to each other, that such regulations could proceed: but if the prince and the chambers are to communicate with each other, through whom can it be better effected than the ministers who originate the proposals, and must, therefore, best understand their intention?

We need hardly mention that the monarchical principle requires that the prince should have the power which every private person has, of choosing his own servants and advisers, and of dismissing them at will. It appears, in fact, almost incredible that this right should ever have been disputed. Chambers which claim the dictation of the servants and counsellors of a prince, not only invade the province of government, but by that act declare their prince for ever incapable, and range themselves in a faction, whose object is to silence every voice but their own.

We have thus, according to our plan, traced out the relations which should exist between

princes and their chambers, if the monarchical principle is to be maintained. The further development of them we leave to politicians. But if any one should think that too much is here allowed to the sovereign, I would refer him to Great Britain[i] as a proof that all these conditions may be fulfilled and the rights of the prince maintained without infringing the liberties of the nation[k]. This will be an answer, at least to those who desire a true monarchy and not a republic. In that state a fortunate concurrence of circumstances has for ages been at work in forming the constitution. It is not, therefore, in the situation of the continental states which have to provide themselves with a constitution for the first time, and the question cannot be there asked which has been asked here: viz.

[i] [How far recent events may have changed the constitution of Great Britain, and made it inconsistent with the conditions prescribed by Professor Heeren, the reader may himself determine. One point appears to be generally admitted, if not so generally lamented, viz. that by the destruction of the government boroughs the crown must henceforth be limited in its choice of ministers to such men as the constituent bodies of the country may, for the moment, be willing to return to parliament. And yet perfect freedom in this respect is, by Professor Heeren, considered so essential to the idea of monarchy, as scarcely to call for remark. See above, p. 192. Tr.]

[k] The author trusts that he will not, on this account, be supposed to wish for the introduction of the entire British constitution into the states of the continent. He is well aware of the impossibility of this. And even if it were possible, he is by no means inclined to think it desirable. A diversity and multiplicity of constitutions is the inseparable condition of our political, and with it of our general, improvement. But this should not prevent us from deriving some practical hints from so great and prominent an example; due regard being of course had to the situation in which we are placed. To deny that any thing from thence is applicable here, would be as absurd as to assert that every thing is so.

From whom is this constitution to come? The answer to the question itself is simple. From the sovereign power. In monarchies, therefore, from the princes. In republics, from the people or their representatives. The only difficulty which attends it has arisen from an attempt to apply the notions which the writers above-named entertained on the origin of states, to the present time. An application of which they will by no means admit. All those writers suppose a "state of nature," out of which men advanced into civil society: but in none of the countries which desire the establishment of a constitution does such a state exist. In every one of them there is an existent sovereign: from whom but him ought these new institutions to proceed? It is only by assuming with Rousseau that even in monarchies there is a dormant sovereignty of the people, which may upon any occasion be awakened and become active, that this right can be denied.

But although, according to our views both expediency and justice require that these new institutions should proceed from the existing authority, yet this by no means implies that the princes may not be assisted in planning them by a body of advisers, even though that body should be popularly constituted. This much, however, I believe to be necessary for the maintenance of the monarchical principle, viz. that such a body should have the power of advising, and that only.

Experience of recent date has shown the consequences of greater concessions; the universal acceptance of a constitution by the voice of the people, can never be any thing but an empty form, and the regular establishment of it by the states may be easily shown to bring greater dangers than a concession of it by the sovereign.

Were it possible, within the German confederation alone, to come to an agreement on the boundary line which should be drawn under the new constitutions between the rights of the prince and of the states, were the points which we have stipulated for above, assumed as matters of course, the rest would consist chiefly of local modifications which could easily be determined by common consent[1].

[1] [At the congress of Vienna it was provided that representative constitutions should be adopted by the federate states of Germany. But the article (the 13th of the Act of Confederation) was so vaguely worded as to admit of almost any latitude of meaning; and accordingly different expositions of it were made and supported by different princes; many of which, as may be believed, tended to the continuance of their own authority. See RUSSEL'S *Germany*, i. 106. The list, however, of those states whose rulers have either adopted or had thrust upon them the liberal meaning of the article, is now pretty large, and embraces Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Hanover, Baden, the Grand Duchy of Hesse, Brunswick, Nassau, Mecklenburg, Saxe Weimar, etc. Of these, Saxe Weimar was the first to receive the boon, although from Russel's amusing description its value does not appear to have been very fully appreciated by the people.

All these constitutions (to quote the words of Heeren himself, in the new edition of his Manual) "Notwithstanding many modifications, in respect both of the organisation and the greater or less publicity of their transactions, have hitherto coincided in the following points: 1st. The monarchical principle has every where been upheld, in the mode of conferring constitutions by the rulers, and by a just determination of their

The voice of those who demand constitutional governments is become too loud to be silenced without danger. But at the same time there is no doubt but that expectations are entertained which no change in the forms of the states themselves can satisfy.

Those who have speculated upon the forms of constitutional government, and set up new maxims of their own, ought at the same time to have learnt to estimate those forms at their true value. They should have shown what they admit of being, and of producing. But in rejecting this course, in giving themselves up without reserve to their metaphysical speculations, they have originated and constantly kept up the error, that every thing depends upon these forms; and that from them, and not from the spirit of the government and of the administration, the welfare or ruin of states must proceed. And thus it has become more and more customary to consider the state as a machine; and whilst men speak of *the machine of state,* they have fallen into the dangerous mistake of supposing that this *machine* may, like any other, be taken to pieces and put together again at will.

They forget that not only mechanical but

rights in relation to the states. 2ndly. The assembly of the states consists of two chambers. 3rdly. To these is allotted their proper part in the legislation, especially with regard to taxation."

The 13th article, therefore, does not appear to have been wholly inoperative; but it must be remembered that the act which contains it, also contains provisions for the Diet of Frankfort. Tr.]

moral powers are at work in it! What are state forms themselves beyond any other empty forms? What more are they—if I may be allowed a simile, not perhaps sufficiently exalted, but yet most applicable—than the track in which the chariot wheels are to run? It certainly is not a matter of indifference how this track is formed, for if it be even and easy, the motion will be so also—if it be uneven and rough, the checks will be more frequent, and some improvements will be required. If it be wholly useless, it must be given up; but be it ever so good, are we thereby assured that the chariot will continue in the track? Will the track alone be sufficient to restrain it? This depends rather upon the steeds who draw, and the charioteer who guides.

But to drop all metaphor—no forms will benefit a state, unless the government and people be moral and enlightened. And as to devising any which shall contain the warrant of its own stability, this would be even more absurd than to endeavour the discovery of a perpetuum mobile which should maintain its own impulse for ever.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE RISE AND GROWTH OF THE CONTINENTAL INTERESTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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THE political system of Europe is greatly and beneficially modified by containing within it an insular state, which by its extent, and the use to which it applies its domestic resources, maintains its rank among the leading powers. However great the resemblance which may exist amongst the cultivated nations of Europe in points of civilisation, religion, and language, the insular character of such a state necessarily gives rise to certain peculiarities, which cannot be effaced. The barriers which nature has interposed between it and the rest of the world, almost certainly produce a feeling of independence among its inhabitants, which may not only be in the highest degree useful to themselves, but may also serve as an example to others; and that in our quarter of the world it has done so, is sufficiently proved by the history of modern Europe. Moreover, the existence of such a power gives greater security to the political system to which it belongs, against the occurrence of a revolution, which would at one blow annihilate the whole: since the situation of such

a state will either altogether exempt it, or at least enable it more easily to escape the shock. But the peculiar importance of such a state to the whole system, consists in the necessity which its own maintenance imposes, of becoming a naval power; and thus rendering it impossible that land forces alone should decide the supremacy. In every system of states, the pre-eminence of one over the rest must eventually ensue, (especially when there is a considerable difference of power among the members,) if the preponderance depend upon land forces alone. Even the expedient of the balance of power, however carefully planned, will prove but a weak security against the occurrence of some favourable opportunity by which the state whose resources, or the talent of its leaders, or both, have rendered it the strongest, may be enabled to take that power into its own hands which in the common course of affairs will at some time or other lead to oppression and tyranny, although it may not at first assume so decisive a character. The rise, therefore, of one or more naval powers, by providing that in the political balance no single interest shall have the preponderance, is of itself most beneficial to the whole; and the more so, because from the very nature of such a power it cannot itself become dangerous to the independence of the rest. But to the reflecting observer, the existence of naval powers acquires its chief interest from the consideration that they can only result from an

advanced state of civilisation. Barbarians, it is true, will fit out ships for piracy; or if they are sufficiently powerful, for the purpose of conveying their armies into foreign countries and subduing them; but a naval power, in the true sense of the word, arises only from a participation in the commerce of the world, and has for its proper object the protection of its shipping and its colonies in distant seas. This presupposes, therefore, that both shipping and colonies are already in existence; and as they cannot exist except under a high state of civilisation, it follows that without such, there cannot be a naval power. The history of modern Europe affords an indisputable proof of this; for it demonstrates clearly and decidedly that the advance of political civilisation, and the decrease of ambitious dreams and plans of universal monarchy, correspond with the gradual formation of naval powers and the growth of their influence upon the political balance.

The policy of a naval power as such, must necessarily have some peculiarities; but much more so, when this power occupies, like England, an insular position. We should undoubtedly be taking a very partial view, were we to found upon this peculiarity in its geographical situation a system of politics, the rules of which such a state should be supposed invariably to follow; for as long as it stands in various relations to other states—as long as their fortunes are an object of interest to it, and more especially as

long as it is a member of a political system, it will be compelled according to the variation in these circumstances, to vary its own maxims of policy. But the relations in which an insular state stands to those of the continent, may nevertheless be reduced to certain general classes, which have reference to as many distinct interests; and this arrangement seems here to be the more important, since in an historical development of the British continental interests, each of these classes comes, at certain periods, under consideration.

We may distinguish four distinct interests by which, notwithstanding its geographical separation, an insular state may become politically bound, as it were, to the continent. 1st. The interest of independence and security. 2nd. The interest of trade and commerce. 3rd. The interest of aggrandisement, by conquest on the continent. 4th. The personal and family interest of the rulers.

With regard to the two last of these classes, I have nothing general to say; for they are in themselves sufficiently intelligible; and in the case of England, the former does not exist; while as to the latter, no one doubts that the agreement or disagreement of the family with the national interest, is the only rule by which its value can be determined. But the two first classes require a more minute examination, not only separately, but also in their mutual relation to each other.

It is most ungrounded to suppose that because an insular state is supported by a navy, it is therefore to take no share in the political transactions of other states. It is certainly by its navy rendered more secure, but by no means perfectly so. Even with numerous fleets it is not always possible to cover widely extended coasts; and when it is besides necessary for such a power to defend many and distant possessions, on the preservation of which its existence, or at least its wealth, depends, the difficulty is greatly increased. It is true, an insular power has not much to fear from the growth of one which is powerful only by land; but on the other hand, the danger is doubly increased when this power is also a naval power, and as such copes with it. In this relation stood France and England to each other. The proximity of their situations, the contiguity of their foreign possessions, the national hatred which for centuries had received constant nourishment, necessarily produced a rivalry such as does not and could not exist elsewhere.

But when such an insular power is at the same time a commercial state, there becomes connected with the political interest, a commercial one, which will not permit continental relations to be neglected. This commercial interest can have no other object than keeping open, and as much as possible enlarging, the market for the disposal of its merchandise; and from this necessarily follows a closer alliance with

those nations who will encourage or promote such disposal. Prudence forbids indifference to the fortunes of these allies; and thus arises of itself the connection between political and commercial interests. But notwithstanding the truth of this, it cannot be denied that this connection has in modern politics been frequently considered as more binding than it really is. It is sufficiently proved by experience, that the progress of commerce depends immediately on the wants of the buyer and the interest of the seller. Political relations may impede or promote, but they can neither create or destroy it. In countries where the means of communication are, as in Europe, so various and so easy, commerce will find a channel even in the hottest wars, and under the severest restrictions. Where demand exists on one side, and the love of gain on the other, they easily ôvercome or evade the impediments thrown in their way by governments. The experience of modern times has thrown much light upon the connection of political and mercantile interests; it has shown that if they cannot be wholly separated, neither are they so closely related as they were held to be in times when it was thought that the course which commerce should take, might be prescribed by mercantile treaties, or mercantile interdictions.

Independently of these causes, there is yet another ground which renders it impossible for an insular power, which occupies a prominent place in a political system, to be indifferent to

the proceedings of other states; a ground, which in the eyes of a practical politician, is certainly far from unimportant—the maintenance of its station and dignity as a member of that system. In a political body like that of modern Europe, where such unwearied activity prevails, where so many energies are constantly at work, any seclusion from the common affairs, even when of no immediate importance to it, would, to a powerful and leading state, be the unavoidable commencement of its decline. In proportion as such a state contracts its sphere, that of its rival must necessarily expand; while the one loses, the other gains; and how desirable soever the maintenance of peace may be, the remark is not without its value, that power increases only through a struggle, and that a long peace purchased by such politics as these, often proves a very dangerous blessing.

The history of Europe has furnished many useful examples in this respect; but none more so than that of the United Netherlands. Its active interference in the politics of Europe cost this state many heavy sacrifices, and even reduced it to the brink of destruction. After the peace of Utrecht, it embraced the opposite principle, and has maintained it as steadily as it has been able. But from that period began its decline, and the internal causes of its fall worked thenceforth with a certainty proportionate to their undisturbed development. An absolute monarchy, which chiefly depends upon the ge-

nius of the ruler, is much more calculated to outlast a long period of peace; although even here symptoms of decline are usually visible. But in a state with a republican constitution, whether combined with monarchy or not, other causes step in, which, under such circumstances, must almost necessarily prove detrimental. The times of peace are here generally the times of factions; which, although they may not directly bring on a civil war, do not the less gnaw at the very heart of the state. An active participation in foreign affairs, on the other hand, is well calculated to avert the internal fermentation; it affords a subject of common interest to all; whereas men's political opinions invariably become divided when they turn only upon their domestic relations.

This, however, will not, it is hoped, be understood as a defence of rash and general interference in foreign politics and wars. Between such thoughtless interference and indolent apathy, there is a medium which is fixed by the interest and the strength of the power concerned; and it is of the observance of this medium that we are now speaking. In order not to exceed it, the statesman must have not only clear and fixed notions respecting the real interests, but also respecting the extent of influence which the state possesses, of which he guides the helm; and the latter of these seems no less difficult to attain to than the former; for the delusions of pride and self-conceit are to

the full as dangerous as those of ambition and self-interest.

These considerations may serve as an introduction to the following inquiry, which has for its aim, an historical development of the continental interests of Great Britain, during the last three centuries. The task which I propose to myself, is to give in chronological arrangement, a review of the links by which the political and mercantile interests of England were bound up with those of the continent; and to examine how they became united, and how loosened. Unconnected and transient relations, such as sometimes arose in the course of great wars, do not come under our consideration; those only, which were lasting, deserve our attention. The history of the continental interests of Britain can be clearly viewed only, by considering it according to the periods in which it was subject to its principal changes. We must therefore take the following:—1. The period from Henry VII. to Elizabeth. 2. That of Elizabeth. 3. That of the Stewarts, down to William III. 4. That of William III. and Anne. 5. That of the house of Hanover, down to the commencement of the French revolution. 6. The period from this, down to the restoration of the political system of Europe, which the revolution had destroyed.

FIRST PERIOD.

FROM HENRY VII. TO ELIZABETH, 1484—1558.

Even during the middle ages, England had taken a very active part in the affairs of the continent, by her wars with France, and her endeavours to conquer that kingdom. The marriage of Isabella, daughter of Philip the Handsome, with Edward II.,—a marriage in so many respects unfortunate,—had laid the foundation of these contests, since Edward III., the offspring of this union, grounded his claims to the French throne, in opposition to those of the house of Valois, upon his maternal descent. A series of wars ensued, which for a long time were as fortunate for England, as their consequences in the middle of the 15th century were fatal. The political interest which connected England with the continent, was therefore at this period only one of conquest. In times when the principles by which politics were directed were as yet coarse and unrefined, and when the love of conquest was the sole spring of action, such plans were possible, although even then there were evident indications, that a lasting subjection of France to England was nothing but a dream. Since the year 1450, the English had been excluded from France, but the bare title of king of France was not all which England retained. Political ideas, so deeply rooted as these were, are not easily got rid of; and the

result shows, that they were active in England throughout the whole of this period, since every opportunity was eagerly seized, which held out the least chance of carrying them into execution. Brittany was at that time under the rule of its own dukes, in whom, as they were almost constantly embroiled with the kings of France, England found allies within France itself; and had not this position of affairs been altered, by the extinction of the male line (1488) and the subsequent union of the heiress Anna with Charles VIII., the consequences of it would probably have been long felt. Besides, whilst Calais remained in the hands of the English, it was imagined that they possessed as it were the gate of France, by which they might enter as often as they thought fit.

But even in the reign of Henry VII., England obtained by family connection an interest in the continent. Arthur, son of Henry VII., married Catharine, daughter of Ferdinand the Catholic; and upon his death, while still a youth, she became the wife of his brother, afterwards Henry VIII.

During the reign of Henry VII., these relations could not have any important consequences, because he purposely avoided, as much as possible, all interference in foreign transactions, in order to secure his own throne. Once only he crossed over to Calais with an army, to please Maximilian I., when he was deprived of his betrothed bride, Anna, the heiress of Brit-

tany, by Charles VIII., who thus laid the foundation for this important acquisition; but although the English interest was, by this circumstance, exposed to imminent danger, it was more a financial, than a military expedition. For 600,000 crowns Charles VIII. purchased the treaty of Estaples (1492); in a few weeks Henry returned home, and the alliance between England and Brittany was for ever dissolved.

But during the reign of his son and successor, Henry VIII. (1509—1547), the conseqences became, on this account, the more striking. When he ascended the throne, Italy had by the league of Cambray, become the centre of European politics. England, from her position and other circumstances, could derive no benefit whatever from taking a share in the proceedings in Italy; nay, her neutrality must have given her the advantage over France, while this state was fruitlessly expending its strength in attempts at conqests. But the family connection with Spain was now employed by his father-in-law, Ferdinand the Catholic, for the purpose of involving Henry in these transactions.

When the league of Cambray fell to pieces, and out of it arose the holy league against France, Ferdinand joined himself to it, in order to find an opportunity of seizing Navarre. He fully estimated the advantages which would probably result to him from the interference of Henry, whom he flattered with the hope of being able to enforce his old claims to Guienne.

He obtained his object; Henry VIII. quarrelled with France, and when he had done so, his father-in-law and his other allies forsook him, and after a fruitless invasion of Picardy, he put an end to this war, which had exhausted the crown treasures left him by his father, by a peace (1514) intended to be confirmed by the marriage of his sister to Louis XII.

An interest so entirely misunderstood as this had been, and only raised by the craftiness of a false friend, could not be otherwise than transient. But the times soon changed; and when Louis XII. and Ferdinand (1516) left the stage, at nearly the same time, and Francis I. and Charles V. stepped into their places, new relations arose, which became, or at least seemed to become, much more important to the continental interests of Great Britain. The new rivalry between the French and Austrian-Spanish houses, first laid the foundation of the system of a balance of power, and four bloody wars between Charles and Francis were the result.

Under these circumstances, it was very natural, that the idea should arise in England, that she was able to turn the scale in these wars. And what can we conceive so well calculated to flatter the vanity of Henry VIII., as to consider himself the umpire of Europe? And indeed he seemed to have many means in his power for accomplishing this object. If he embraced the side of Charles, he could easily injure France, since the possession of Calais made it easy for

him to land troops on the French coast; and if he joined the party of Francis, he could, in the same manner, make an incursion into the Flemish possessions of Charles V. We cannot, therefore, be surprised, that he really assumed this character; but he acted it so badly, that it led to no results; and by casting a single glance into history, we shall easily discover why it did not. When the contest between Francis I. and Charles V. first began, in the year 1521, and both monarchs strove for the friendship of Henry, it was for a time uncertain which side he would join, until at length Charles succeeded in winning over cardinal Wolsey, by promises and flattery. Through him the king was also gained. But still the war in Picardy was only a subordinate transaction, and its results could be of no great importance. The melancholy fate of Francis I. at Pavia (1525) brought Henry to his senses. He now began to fear, that his ally might become too strong; he therefore forsook him, and after the peace of Madrid, by which Francis bought his freedom at the expense of conditions which he had no intention of fulfilling (1527), he even went so far as to unite himself with his former enemy. But at the commencement of the second war, he voluntarily disabled himself; since he was induced, by commercial considerations, to concede to the emperor the neutrality of the Netherlands, the only point in which he was capable of doing him any injury. The consequence was, that he

gave his ally no assistance, and as his attention was engaged during the war, by religious matters, and the question of his own marriage, he appeared wholly to have forgotten the important part which he was to play, and took no share in the third war between those two monarchs, which was concluded by the ten years' armistice of Nice (1538). But when the fourth broke out (1541), he formed a close alliance with Charles, not because he then feared the power of France, but because he wished to gratify his own capricious humours. The compact which he concluded with Charles V., is a striking example of the politics of that time; the conditions show that there was no intention they should be observed, because their observance was impossible. Henry VIII. desired nothing less than the French crown, and in order to conquer the whole of France, he went to Calais with an insignificant force, while Charles invaded Champagne. But the allies fell out amongst themselves; Charles concluded a separate treaty at Cressy (1544), and left his ally to get out of his difficulties as he best could; Henry was contented with the promise of an annual payment, which, on the other side, there was no intention of discharging, although Boulogne[a], which he had taken, was left in his hands as a pledge for eight years.

From all this it is clear, that the pretended

[a] This, during the reign of his son, was recovered by France, on the payment of a much smaller sum than had been originally stipulated.

maintenance of the balance between the two great powers of the continent, in these times, existed only in name. A monarch, who was ever the slave of his inclination, and the tool of those by whom he was surrounded, was incapable of adhering to a firm line of politics; and this remark applies with equal truth to his minister, cardinal Wolsey, who was not less guided by his passions than his master. It might have been expected, that the new interest created under Henry VIII. by the Reformation, might have caused a connection between England and the continent; but the conduct of Henry rendered this impossible, notwithstanding the share which he took in these transactions. As long as he claimed the supremacy, and only exchanged the power of the pope in England for his own, without tolerating the protestant doctrine, the adherents of which he persecuted, there could be no union between him and the protestant princes of Germany; and the attempts which he made to attain this object were necessarily fruitless.

Under the government of his son and successor, Edward VI., the political connection with the continent was not in any way strengthened; it was, on the contrary, made apparent, that the ties by which, under Henry VIII., England had been united to the continent, had arisen, not from any national interest, but from the caprices of that king. Although, during this reign, the Reformation was introduced into England, that

country was not involved in the great crisis, by which the condition of the protestants of Germany was determined, although so fair an opportunity of its becoming so was offered by the alliance of Henry II. of France and Maurice, against Charles V. But upon the premature death of Edward, and the succession of his sister Mary, England was brought into a new connection with the continent, and one which might have had the most fatal consequences, by the union of Mary and Philip II. of Spain (1554). It is true, the parliament took all possible precautions, but had there been any children of the marriage, Philip's unwearied activity might easily have overcome these difficulties. Even as it was, the political relations of England were affected by it. When Philip II., soon after his succession, saw himself compelled (1557) to a war with France, he contrived by his personal influence with his wife, to make her a party to it. The result was the loss of Calais, the only remains of the old conquests of Britain in continental France[b]. Calais was taken by the French in 1558, and at the time was considered a most serious loss; but in reality it was a gain to England. It was this that chiefly tended to dispel the old visions of conquest in France, which had so often been the occasion of undertakings against that country, although the impracticability of the design might long have been discovered.

[b] The islands of Guernsey and Jersey she still retains.

From what has been said, it is clear that, although England during this period occasionally interfered in the affairs of the continent, the British continental interests were not as yet become national interests; they existed only in the family connections of the reigning houses, or in the old claims of the kings of England upon France: that is to say, in an idea which had already outlived its own strength. For her independence, England had then little to fear from either France or Spain, since Italy was the prize for which these powers were contending; and if there had been any apprehension that they might hereafter become dangerous, it would have been most natural to permit them to wear out their strength against each other. It remains therefore only to inquire, how far the interests of England during this period may have been involved in those of the continent by its commercial transactions.

As England was then wholly without colonies which might give her the produce of distant parts of the world to convey to other markets, and as her domestic industry was too confined to produce any considerable means of commerce, it is easy to see that her trading interest at this time could not enter into the most remote comparison with that which arose in the subsequent periods of her history. The great commercial revolution for which the ground was laid by the discovery of America and the East Indies, in the beginning of this period,—the only

one which furnishes an epoch in the general history of trade,—was not entirely without its influence upon England; for as early as 1497, John Cabot sailed on a voyage of discovery to North America, and others followed him; but those discoveries, although made with the *consent* were without the *support* of the government; and during this period led to no advantageous results.

But, in the mean time, the wool which England produced, and which was exported partly in a raw and partly in a manufactured state, was of so much importance that it was not entirely without influence upon her continental policy. From the twelfth century, the breeding of sheep (which was afterwards greatly improved by the introduction of the Spanish breed, in the reign of Edward IV.) had been the principal employment of the English farmer; and after continuing to export it raw for a considerable period, cloth manufactures were at length introduced. The nearest market, and that to which English wool was first carried, was in the Netherlands, the manufacturers of which depended for their prosperity upon the trade; and hence arose a connection which existed not merely in the caprice of the sovereign or the minister, but in the real interests of the nation. Even in this period it had some political consequences; for when Henry VIII. declared war against Charles V. in 1527, the discontent of those engaged in this business, compelled the

king to make a separate treaty for the neutrality of the Netherlands. The sequel of this inquiry will show, that as the connection with this country was one of the oldest, so it has always remained one of the firmest links of the British continental interests. Besides the trade with the Netherlands, England found a market for her wool in the north-eastern countries of Europe, in Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, and even in Russia. This trade was for some time carried on only by the vessels belonging to the Hanseatic league; which, as it is well known, had one of its commercial establishments in London. But the English began to try all means in order to bring it into their own hands, and thus differences arose; which however ended rather in piracy, and that of the most cruel kind, than in formal wars. If the power of this league, however, had not been already so much on the decline, that Elizabeth was enabled to deprive it of its commercial privileges in England, these circumstances might have had a much greater influence upon the continental politics of this country, than actually was the case.

These are the ties, which under the first four Tudors, connected England with the continent of Europe. They were all of the most delicate and frail nature; and for the most part detrimental to England. But it was reserved for the last monarch of this house to create a firmer and better connection; and in the history

of the continental interests of England, her reign undoubtedly constitutes a distinct and very important period.

SECOND PERIOD.

PERIOD OF ELIZABETH, 1558—1603.

In the whole history of the British continental interests there are, properly speaking, only two periods which form general epochs—that of Elizabeth, and that of William III. However great may have been the claims advanced by her arrogant father, it was only under Elizabeth that England raised itself to the first rank among nations. During this reign it first learnt its power and the proper sphere of its action; the old visions of continental conquests vanished away; all the family connections by which England had been united with the continent were dissolved; and in their place arose relations of a very different character, produced by neither private interest nor vain projects of aggrandisement. Elizabeth has the merit of having made her private interest subservient to that of her nation, or at least of having united the two, whilst her predecessors were guided solely by the former; and this, notwithstanding the cunning and deceitfulness sometimes displayed in it, forms the principal feature of her glorious reign.

Her first undertaking was the introduction of Protestantism into England; and this determined not only the internal relations of her

kingdom, but became for a long time the true foundation of the foreign interests of Britain.

A change of religion was in itself an affair of the people, and not of the government alone. Elizabeth, in yielding to the wishes of a large majority of the nation, founded a real and universal national interest; but at the same time one which affected the government. And as the Reformation implicated England in the politics of the continent, it is at once evident that this connection must have been closer than any could have been before. It now for the first time became possible, that a real continental interest should arise, at least if we understand by this one which is not merely the personal interest of the ruler, but also that of the people. Such a connection was now, by many circumstances, rendered unavoidable.

About the time when the Reformation was introduced into England, the religious interest[c] was also in a great degree a political one. The maintenance of the constitution rested directly on Protestantism; and it could not escape the observation of the queen, that the fall of that religion would have involved her own. She was forced, therefore, to become its defender, but circumstances made it impossible that she should confine herself to playing that part at home. England, (for Sweden had not yet taken a decided part,) was the first leading power which

[c] See above, *Political Consequences of the Reformation*, second period; page 78.

had declared for the Protestants; and Elizabeth was therefore considered as the general supporter, if not the head, of the party; a character which she could not refuse without endangering her own interests. Then as Spain was at this time governed by Philip II., the most determined of the defenders of the old doctrine, a man too whose pride Elizabeth had wounded by the refusal of his hand, the antipathy which sprung up between these two powers, became an almost necessary consequence. But, again, it was this very antipathy which laid the foundation of the greatness of England. The religious interest now involved that of independence and political existence; and England, in entering the lists against the first power of the time, was under the necessity of either raising herself to eminence, or abjectly submitting to be crushed; the choice lay between victory and destruction.

That this relation between England and Spain could last thirty years (1558—1588) without breaking into open war, while at the same time Elizabeth never, during this long period, made a single sacrifice of her real interests, is undoubtedly the most splendid proof of her superior political ability. But in the mean time, other circumstances arose on the continent, which very much strengthened the connection with England; namely, the war of the Hugonots in France, and the revolution in the Netherlands. And although one of these ties was broken off

even during the reign of Elizabeth, the other seemed to be permanently established.

When the disturbances began in the Netherlands, there were three reasons why England should take part with the insurgents. It has been mentioned, that the Flemish provinces were the principal market for the disposal of British produce [d], and even on this account England could not be indifferent to their fate. This, then, was one reason for interference. The second regarded the religious interests which they had in common. The struggle which was here beginning, was one against religious tyranny; if the protestant creed was victorious in the Netherlands, its maintenance in Germany and England was also secured; but in both countries this was more than doubtful, if Spain succeeded in stifling it there. The third reason was, that the loss of the Netherlands would be a blow to the Spanish power, which must eventually prove fatal to it, and insure success to England in the rivalry which had now commenced.

For these reasons Elizabeth took a share in the Flemish disturbances; and this share was advantageous not only to her, but to the nation.

[d] Even at the beginning of the troubles in 1564, an attempt to prevent the importation of English cloths, occasioned disputes which were terminated only by a provisional arrangement. See Rapin, in whose work may also be found an account of the trade between England and the Netherlands. Its whole value is put at twelve millions in gold, (quere, what dollar?) of which the exportation of cloth alone from England amounted to five millions. Vol. viii. p. 308. ed. 1729.

She did not do more however than give them scanty subsidies, and permit her subjects to serve as volunteers in their army. She wished, as it appears, to avoid, if possible, a war with Spain; and she well knew, that the scanty assistance she gave, was best calculated to develope their powers, and thus to obtain her principal object.

It was only in 1585, that she made a formal treaty with them, by which, in consideration of the money which she had advanced, and the troops which she supplied, three of their ports were pledged to her, and a place in the council of war, then existing, was promised to her ambassador; at the same time, however, she declined the proffered sovereignty over these provinces. These and other well known circumstances led to a formal quarrel with Spain, and the interests of England and the Netherlands, in respect to this power, became inseparably united. The destruction of the invincible armada (1588) freed England at once from all apprehension of the Spanish power; and now Elizabeth had no longer any wish to put a stop to a war, the circumstances of which were favourable not only to the security, but also to the greatness of her empire.

If we consider the whole conduct of Elizabeth towards the Netherlands, we shall plainly discover what her intentions were. That this infant state, just liberating itself from thraldom, would advance with such gigantic strides to-

wards the greatness which awaited it: that it would not only outstrip Spain, but, by engrossing the commerce of the world, would even surpass England itself, and oblige that state to strain every nerve, in order to supplant its rival: all this did not occur to her, nor was it probable that it should. She fancied that she was raising up a state, which could exist only under the protection of England, and would therefore never be able to act in opposition to the British influence. She wished to establish her supremacy here, as she had done in Scotland, and would gladly have done in France. This manner of extending her power, was as much studied by Elizabeth as it was by Philip II.; but she knew how to play her game more secretly, and calculated the chances better. It could not be otherwise, however, than that the mutual rivalry between England and Spain, (on which now depended the balance of Europe,) should produce these struggles: the territory which one side gained, was lost by the other; and each therefore was compelled to endeavour, not only to maintain, but also to add to its possessions.

The turn which the affairs of the Netherlands took during this reign, must have tended still more to strengthen the ties between them and England. The Belgic provinces, it is true, were restored during the war to the Spanish dominion, and the Batavian alone maintained their independence; but even while the war was raging, all manufactures and trade had been

transferred from the former, which were the constant scene of action, to the latter, which suffered infinitely less; and since in these Protestantism finally triumphed, they became connected with England by religious as well as mercantile interests, and common enmity to Spain remained the watchword of both nations.

The relations in which Elizabeth stood towards France, were much more complicated; and she could hardly herself have been aware, how far they would lead her. The protracted hopes of marriage which she held out to Francis of Alençon, the presumptive heir to the crown, and which, even allowing for the feelings of her sex to the degree which her history requires, it could never have entered into her plans to fulfil, were the veil under which she concealed her true designs. The religious wars, which commenced in 1562, had lasted but a short time, when she began to support the Hugonots by intercession, by money, and by volunteers; and this she continued to do, without openly breaking off her amicable relations with the government. It would be difficult to find a parallel to the political game which she played here, and which surpassed in subtlety even that carried on by her in the Netherlands. It was impossible to know how these wars might terminate, but here too her rivalry with Spain formed her chief inducement to act as she did. As Philip II. supported the league in order to further his own views, she opposed him by siding with Henry of

Navarrè; and when this prince came into quiet possession of his throne, she joined him in the war against Spain, which, as concerned France, was terminated by the peace of Vervins (1598). But the pacification of the Hugonots by the edict of Nantes, and the death of Philip, which happened in the same year, were of themselves sufficient to destroy this interest, the very nature of which was but transient.

These were the principal supports on which rested the continental interests of England during this reign; but the great and manifold development of the powers of the nation during the same period, had also an influence upon them which must be the less neglected in proportion to its greater permanency.

It was during the time of Elizabeth that England first learnt for what she was destined, and became acquainted with her proper sphere of action, since it was then that she laid the foundation of her universal commerce and navigation, although it was not till a later period that the structure was brought to perfection. The rivalry with Spain chiefly conduced to this; and as the possessions of that nation extended over the most remote parts of the earth, England was not wanting in the courage requisite to seek and encounter its enemies on the most distant seas. In this manner were the seeds of many branches of British commerce, which attained their perfection long afterwards, sown, since England now sought to appropriate to herself her own

carrying trade, which hitherto had been chiefly in the hands of foreigners. While she was seeking a north-eastern passage to India, arose her commerce by way of Archangel with Moscow, and even Persia. Thus originated the share which she took in the Newfoundland fisheries, which afterwards became of such immeasurable importance. Thus, too, the first trial of the African slave trade. It was thus that the Hanseatic league was deprived of its privileges in England, and British ship-owners got the continental trade into their hands. Thus, too, were made the first, although ineffectual attempts, to colonise North America. Thus was England even then induced to turn her attention to the commerce with India by the way of the Cape of Good Hope; and as early as the end of this reign (1600) the old East India Company was established, although as yet there were no important possessions in those parts. Thus many discoveries were made, and to this it is owing that Drake made his successful voyage round the world.

Most of these new branches of commerce were, it is true, so inconsiderable at that time, that they could not be fairly regarded as possessing direct political influence. Commercial wars, strictly speaking, had not as yet arisen; but the importance of trade in general began to be more sensibly felt. To this it must be added, that with the commerce and the navigation of England, her naval power was also extended.

As yet England had not been, in the present sense of the word, a naval power—it was only in the reign of Henry VIII. that a slight foundation was laid for that "*Royal Navy*" in which was to consist the future strength of the country. The rivalry with Spain rendered an increase of naval power necessary, and therefore it was augmented under Elizabeth; but some great trial of strength was wanting to prove its whole importance to England. This was afforded by the invincible armada; and from that time the conviction became deeply rooted that the security and independence of Britain depends upon her wooden walls. From that moment she suddenly became conscious of her power, and the defensive war was changed into an offensive one; from it too we must date the rise of her designs upon the sovereignty of the seas, which, cleared as they now were of the Spanish fleets, seemed only to await a new mistress.

The conclusion at which we arrive therefore is, that, 1. The interest of religion under Elizabeth was also that of independence, and of the connection between England and the continent; 2. That during her time the foundation was laid for a commercial interest, the whole power of which however was not to be developed till a later period.

THIRD PERIOD.

PERIOD OF THE STUARTS, 1603—1689.

At the time when the Stuarts ascended the throne of England, the religious interest formed, as is evident from the preceding part of this inquiry, the pivot on which turned the whole politics, both foreign and domestic, at once of England and of the rest of Europe. On Protestantism Elizabeth had founded her throne and her greatness, and a firmer basis they could not have had; because she thus united her interest with that of the people. Her successor appeared therefore to have his way marked out for him; he thought fit, however, to choose another, and thus prepared the fall of his dynasty.

The house of the Stuarts is probably the only one in history which brought on its fall, not so much by practical as by theoretical principles. These principles were, however, at direct variance with the interests of England generally; and more especially with her continental interests. Since Elizabeth, by the defence of Protestantism, had attained the supremacy of protestant Europe, it was evident that to maintain it, her successor must assume the same character. But James I. was rendered incapable of doing so, by the strange mixture of political and religious sentiments in which he loved to indulge, and which remained the hereditary and

deep-rooted sentiments of his family. His theory respecting the high dignity and unlimited power of royalty, determined his religious creed, which was confirmed by the feelings which in his youth had been roused in him by the fate of his mother. He hated the puritans from the bottom of his heart, because he scarcely considered them in any light but that of rebels. He professed that he belonged to the episcopal church, because to be king of England it was necessary that he should do so, but his very first speech in parliament declares in such plain words that Catholicism, (excepting the doctrine of the papal supremacy, which was detestable to him from its limiting the regal power,) was the religion of his heart, that it could not but destroy once and for ever the confidence of the nation in their king[e].

An immediate reaction upon the continental policy of England could not but ensue, and even at the commencement of the reign of James I. it showed itself in two ways; in the peace with Spain, and in the transaction between that power and the Netherlands. In 1604 James I. concluded the war with Spain which Elizabeth had so determinately carried on, by a peace with Philip III.; in which no single advantage was gained for England, and the Netherlands were

[e] This speech, like the rest of those composed by the king himself, forms a curious document illustrative of English history. It contains the seeds of that harvest of misfortunes which the Stuarts afterwards reaped. One might almost say that the evil genius of this family, which drove it blindly from one fault to another, had inspired the king with it.

left to their fate. How far the conditions of that treaty were favourable or unfavourable to England, made but little difference; with this peace expired that rivalry with Spain, which under Elizabeth had been the soul of British politics. On this rivalry was founded the greatness of the nation; through it her naval power had developed itself; and it supported the confidence of the other protestant states of Europe and the supremacy of England. It is clear also, that the change in these relations produced a corresponding one in the whole course of foreign policy pursued by England, and the firmest, and under existing circumstances the most natural, connection between her and the continent was broken.

The second occasion, when the change in the political system of England became apparent, was the negotiation which the Netherlands entered into with Spain, respecting the recognition of their independence in the year 1607. This period was of incalculable importance to England, which had so long fought the same battle as themselves. With what activity would not Elizabeth have applied the negotiation to her own advantage, so as to take the whole credit to herself, and to attach the new state to England, by unstrained but yet secure ties! But thoughts like these did not enter into a head like that of James I. According to his sentiments, the Netherlands were nothing more than rebels to their sovereign, and thus even in the midst of the

negotiation, he acted in so contradictory a manner, that no one knew what his designs were, because he did not know himself. The consequence was, that at length no one noticed him, and Henry IV. obtained the influence which Elizabeth would have secured to herself.

This apathy and indolence which James I. concealed under the name of love of peace, would have completely broken up the relations between England and the continent, had they not been renewed by family circumstances. The care of making a suitable marriage for his son, which, according to his notions, could only be with the daughter of a king, carried him into negotiations, which characterise more perhaps than any thing else, the perverseness of this eccentric king. A Spanish princess was to be the wife of his son and future successor; a catholic, therefore, a descendant of that family and of that nation, who, both by religious and political interest, were the hereditary foes of England. Thus James I. was indifferent to risking his own interest, that of his son, and of his country, for the sake of gratifying a caprice, which found a ready support in his prejudices. This is not the place for reviewing this extraordinary negotiation, in which Spain had the advantage during seven years (1617—1624), of leading the weak monarch according to her own views, and which, when at length it failed, was the occasion of a war, by engaging in which, the luckless Charles took the first step towards his

ruin. But during the progress of these negotiations, the marriage of Elizabeth, only daughter of James I., had created new continental relations, which had a considerable influence. In 1612 she was married to Frederic V. Elector of the Palatinate, who, in 1618, assumed the crown of Bohemia, which, as well as his own family possessions, he lost by the battle of Prague and its results. If James I. had taken an active part in the German war, it would never have been laid to his charge, that he bartered the interest of the empire for that of his daughter. For the first was here concerned as well as the latter; the interest of Protestantism was at stake, and this more especially, because in 1621, the war between Spain and the Netherlands was renewed. But here too James I. played a double part. He did not approve of the undertaking of his son-in-law, because he considered the Bohemians as rebels, and yet he would willingly have seen his daughter a queen. But the close connection between Spain and Austria made the policy of interference still more questionable; for if he had decided on coming forward, a threat from Spain of breaking off the negotiations for the marriage of his son, would have made him as undecided as ever. Hence the melancholy part which he took in this eventful period. An idle show of assistance was all that his son-in-law received from him.

But if James I. thus betrayed the continental interests of England, this neglect brought its

own punishment, and that a severe one. The power which, under his predecessor, had turned the scales in the political balance of Europe, now sank into such insignificance as almost to become the ridicule of Europe. Our inquiry thus far has shown, that the relations between England and the continent were as yet very simple, when compared to those of later times; and yet her history, even under James I., clearly shows that a neglect of her continental interests is with her the signal of decline.

It is true, that the reign of his ill-fated son began with a twofold war, with Spain and with France; but the first arose from the failure of the scheme of marriage, and was founded only on family interests; the other aimed at the defence of the Hugonots in France, who had been disarmed by Richelieu, and therefore the support of religion might be supposed to be involved in it; but the real cause was hatred of that minister; while both were carried on in so weak and spiritless a manner, that they only served to embroil Charles I. with his parliament. Although Charles took some share in the affairs of Germany and of the Palatine family, it was so inconsiderable, that it led to no results; and it was very evident that he was induced to it, not so much by religious or national, as by family interests. The true continental interest of England was left out of sight; and when the storm in his own country began to gather, he had no time to give any attention to foreign

affairs, and England remained as it were isolated in the European system, until Cromwell (1649) had possessed himself of the helm of state. The government of that bold usurper is distinguished, not only by a more active interest in the transient affairs of the continent, but also for the lasting consequences which resulted from it. The stormy times of the revolution had roused a power in England hitherto unknown; almost every one who was capable of it had carried arms, and the spirit of faction had created moral energies, which can be brought into action only at such periods. To this must be added the fact, that, notwithstanding the troubles of the times, the navy had not been neglected either by Charles I. or his father. He had most scrupulously applied the sums granted for its support, and England, as a republic, stood both by land and sea in a more formidable attitude, than she had done as a monarchy.

The private interest of the protector made it, no doubt, requisite that he should take an active part in foreign affairs, as well to afford vent to the excitement at home, as to give splendour to his reign; but, independently of this, a new interest had been springing up, which, in progress of time, rapidly increased, and gradually gained a greater influence upon the relations between England and the great powers of the continent, namely, the colonial interest.

With the East Indies, England had, it is true, for some time carried on a considerable trade,

but as yet it had no territorial possessions, and was confined to a few scattered factories. But even these already furnished occasions of quarrel with Holland and Spain, whose jealousy would suffer no strangers to gain a footing there[f]. But, properly speaking, the first colonies of the English were on the coasts of North America, and the West Indies; and they owed their origin chiefly to political and religious interests. Bands of malcontents wandered across the ocean, and sought beyond its waters a freedom or security, which they either did not, or imagined they did not, find at home. Thus arose the numerous settlements in several of what are the United States, and in 1623, and 1624, in Barbadoes, St. Christopher's, and some of the smaller islands, which the Spaniards had not thought it worth their while to occupy.

These foreign possessions always continued in a certain state of dependence on the mother country, although this relation received different modifications. The mother country was therefore under the obligation of defending them, and as this was especially necessary against the continental powers, the colonial interest naturally became a mainspring in the continental politics of England. This state of things was at first caused by the absurd pretensions of the

[f] Particularly in the year 1623, at Amboina, where the Dutch massacred the English colonists in a horrid manner, under pretence that they were engaged in a conspiracy; and also took the small island of Poleroon from England.

Spaniards, who, as the first discoverers of the new world, claimed the exclusive possession of it, and the sole right of trading in its seas. These claims were not relinquished even in time of peace; and although after the treaty of 1604 these settlements obtained a little more peace, and therefore prospered better, the Spaniards exercised occasional acts of violence and cruelty, which sufficiently proved that they had no intention of resigning their claims, and afforded at least one of the grounds which determined Cromwell to chastise them, when he declared war against them in 1655.

The whole system which the Protector adopted in regard to continental politics, is very comprehensive and complicated, and therefore not easy to include in one view[g]. His whole government show how important he considered it; and although we cannot deny that private feelings and objects influenced his measures, still it is clear that his main object was to make it a means of increasing the commercial navigation of England. The consequences of it were, the two foreign wars which he carried on; viz. that with Holland (1652—1654), and that with Spain (1655—1657).

Whatever other circumstances may have had their influence in the former of these, it was in reality a commercial war, and the first in which

[g] This is the part of Cromwell's history in which Hume has been the least successful. He omits the mention of all those leading principles of his policy, which the slightest glance at it will display.

England had engaged. The relation in which she stood to the West Indian colonies, where the Dutch were in possession of nearly all the commerce of the British islands, and more especially that of Barbadoes, led to the passing of that famous Navigation Act, which not only secured to the mother country the whole trade of the colonies, but also forbade the introduction of European produce in any ships but those of the country from which it came; and thus gave the death blow to the extensive carrying trade of Holland. This Act was therefore little less than a declaration of war. The relations between the two states, however, had undergone a great change. Holland had all but secured the monopoly of the commerce of the world, and England if she wished to have any share of it, could not avoid entering into a contest such as Cromwell engaged in. The dispute which arose respecting the rights of the flag, unimportant as it may appear, displays in a remarkable manner the rivalry of the two nations; but that England by persisting in the Navigation Act, laid the foundation of her naval power, requires no proof.

The war with Spain, with the assistance of France, exercised a twofold influence upon the interests of Britain. In the first place, the conquest of Jamaica (1655) secured for ever the colonial interest in the West Indies. Until that time England possessed only a few of the smaller Carib islands, and that by sufferance rather than

by any power of her own. It was the intention of Cromwell to wrest St. Domingo from the Spaniards, and thus to make England mistress of the West Indies. In this he did not succeed; but the conquest of Jamaica, which although at that time of no moment, became in a few years a flourishing English colony, compensated for the disappointment; and as the demand for their produce increased, the West Indian colonies gradually became of such importance to England as necessarily to influence, and that in a material degree, her relations with other nations which already had established, or were on the point of establishing, settlements in those islands. A second result of this war was the renewal of the scheme of conquests on the continent. It was the intention of the protector to gain possession of the sea-port towns, and perhaps of the whole coast of the Spanish Netherlands; and France was obliged to pledge herself beforehand to resign to England the places which it was proposed should be taken, viz. Dunkirk, Mardyk, and Gravelines; and in this manner the two former really came into the possession of the English. But his views were yet more extensive. He wished to gain also the principal ports in the North sea and the Baltic; and the treaty with Sweden (1657) was intended to prepare the way for this[h]. At this period Charles X., the

[h] According to Hume, he entered into this alliance with Sweden from mere zeal in the protestant cause. Nevertheless, according to the seventeenth article of the treaty, he retained the right of disposing of all fort-

warlike successor of Christina, was planning the formation of a great northern monarchy by the conquest of Poland and Denmark. The protector promised him support, and expected in return the possession of Bremen, of Elsinore, and Dantzic. But a longer life would have been requisite to carry out these plans than fell to the lot of Cromwell; the possession of Jamaica and the Navigation Act, (Dunkirk being sold to the French in 1662,) remained the only permanent memorials of his protectorate.

However extensive therefore were his views of continental policy, it is clear that but few of them were carried into execution. But when the Stuarts were restored to the throne (1660) the old prejudices of their family came back with them, and under the existing circumstances became still more dangerous to England than they had been in the reigns of James I. and his son. It was at this period that Louis XIV. raised his power in so sudden and formidable a manner as to disturb the peace and independence of all his neighbours. In order to carry out his plans, the concurrence of England was indispensable; and although at his first attempt England took part in the alliance which brought about, or seemed to bring about, the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, (1668,) it is well known from history that Charles II. and his venal ministers soon became so wound up with the interests of

resses taken from the Danes; which surely cannot have been wholly dictated by zeal for the protestant cause.

France that they even took part in the war for the subjection of Flanders to France, although that event was evidently opposed to the interests of Britain. The hope that with the aid of France he should be able to overturn the constitution and the established religion, and thus attain unlimited power, was the talisman by which Louis led this abandoned monarch to embrace his interests[1], and induced him, as well as his brother and successor, to continue in them. It would be in vain, during the reign of princes who were guided only by their passions and their prejudices, to look for fixed principles of policy; a revolution was necessary to establish these upon a new foundation.

FOURTH PERIOD.

WILLIAM III. AND ANNE (1689–1714).

We now come to the period which is undoubtedly the most important in the history of the modern continental politics of England, namely, the period of William III. The merit of having laid the foundation of those continental interests which have lasted to our time, belongs undoubtedly to him. In the time of Elizabeth, as we have shown, it was Protestantism which determined the relations between England and the continent. It is true that this spring of action

[1] The conditions of the secret alliance with France (1670) as quoted by Hume, put this point beyond dispute.

operated more powerfully, and for a greater length of time, here, than in any other European state; so much so, that it displayed considerable strength even under William III.; but as it began about this time to relax in other states, the same necessarily became the case before long in England; and here as elsewhere it could only be maintained for a short additional period by the local or family circumstances of the reigning house. Some other powerful inducement was therefore requisite, in order that the participation of England in the affairs of the continent should rest upon higher grounds than the personal connections and inclinations of the monarch. This new spring of action, which has continued down to the latest times the soul of British policy, was the rivalry with France, a principle which was then established for ever. England since that time has scarcely ever entered into any political connections with the continent which have not either mediately or immediately proceeded from this source. This rivalry has been one of the mainsprings of European politics, and the more partial the view which is often taken of this circumstance, the more necessary it is that we should consider it in its real bearings.

The rivalry of these two great powers was undoubtedly the cause, partly of the origin, partly of the extension and of the prolongation of several of the great wars which have desolated not only Europe, but even the most remote parts of the earth. Considered in this

light, we may well excuse the opinion which refers to this rivalry, as to one of their chief causes, the manifold evils which in these times have happened to mankind; but it is undoubtedly a false estimate which would assert that these evils, undeniable as they are, outweigh the advantages which have sprung from the same source. A more extensive view of history in general will lead us to a very different result.

What is the rivalry of nations but the spur, aye, and the most effectual one, to prompt them to the development of their powers? What else therefore than the mainspring by which they are urged to the attainment of that state of civilisation for which they are by their capacities and circumstances fitted? The progress of whole nations is in this respect the same as that of individuals; nor can it be otherwise, since it is of such that they are composed. As amongst individuals it is emulation which ripens youth into manhood, so it is also amongst nations; and it would probably be in vain to search in history for an example of a nation which became great without the impulse of rivalry. The Greeks would never have been the first nation of their time, had it not been for their victory over the Persians! Never would Rome have been mistress of the world, had it not been for the struggle with Carthage; and Carthage would have been without a Hamilcar and a Hannibal, had she not been the rival of Rome. Nay, even when she was mistress of the world, and seemed to

stand without a rival, Rome would scarcely have outlived the first century of our era, had not the contest with the Germanic nations, which finally subdued her, then upheld her in her place. And does not the history of modern Europe present an equal number of examples? Have not Spain, France, and the Netherlands raised themselves since the sixteenth century by their mutual rivalry? Was not the rivalry between the catholic and protestant parties the life of the German confederation? Would Peter the Great, would Frederic II., have reached their height of power, if the one had not had Swedes, the other Austrians to engage with? And yet in none of these instances has national rivalry done so much as in the contest between England and France. It was this which drew out the noblest qualities of both nations—it was this which preserved that love of freedom and independence which is founded on patriotism—it was this which kept alive the most lofty feelings of the human race—it was this which not only brought to perfection the civilisation of these nations, but also planted the seeds of European refinement in the most distant parts of the globe; and thus what in the eyes of short-sighted mortals was frequently considered the source of misery and calamity, became in the hands of Providence the means of producing and diffusing the perfection of our race.

And thus, by taking this view, we escape that partiality which in any less exalted one is un-

avoidable. If we place ourselves in the position of either of the two nations, we shall never be able to form a judgment which will not be accused of partiality by the other; but if we take this higher ground we shall easily escape the reproach. It is not necessary to deny that errors have been committed, or to gloss over past acts of injustice. We grant that from that rivalry have sprung many evils; but in this we only recognise a confirmation of the universal law, that beings so imperfect as we are can never attain to the great and good without alloy, because we require the impulse of our passions before we can put forth the whole of that power with which nature has endowed us.

When William III. was placed on the throne of England, this rivalry was already existing between the nations, although not between the governments; and even the animosity between the nation and the government affords proof of this. The religious influence was still in full force in England, because the nation was convinced of its connection with liberty and independence. But other causes were added to strengthen this rivalry by the spirit of the government of Louis. His conquests must have excited the attention of England the more from their being directed against both the Spanish and the United Netherlands. The independence of the latter depended immediately upon the fate of the former, and we know that the connection between the United Provinces and England was

so close, that even the wars of Cromwell and Charles II. had interrupted it only for a time. But France was becoming a more dangerous neighbour to England, as she now took a place among the leading naval powers; and the rivalry was yet more inflamed by the commercial and colonial system created by Colbert. During the reigns of the two last Stuarts the commerce of England had advanced simultaneously with the extension of her colonies[k]; its importance was now fully felt; and a neighbouring nation which in this point sought to equal, if not to excel her, could not be regarded with indifference. But the colonial system of France now received as great, if not a greater extension than that of England; and hence resulted that unfortunate confusion of the colonies of the two nations[l], in their geographical situations, which has cost so much blood, and will probably cost yet more. In the West and East Indies, and in North America, the French and the English now became neighbours. Their interests therefore crossed each other more and more; they came in contact no longer only in Europe; they found each other in every corner of the world. Even

[k] By the peace of Breda, 1667, she obtained the province of New York; and in 1680 William Penn founded his settlement in Pennsylvania.

[l] We may add, of the European colonies generally. If there were any step which would lead, if not to interminable, at least to lasting peace in Europe, it would be the geographical separation of the colonies. This has been in great part although not wholly accomplished, by the last treaty of peace, which we shall consider hereafter; the fortunes of the Spanish colonies will perhaps bring about the rest.

under the Stuarts this rivalry had displayed itself, notwithstanding the unanimity of the sovereigns. England in 1668 had joined the triple alliance against France, in opposition to the wishes of Charles II.; and although in the next war (1672) Charles united with Louis against Holland, after two years the voice of the nation forced him to break the alliance. We find, then, that at the time of the revolution, the foundation had already been laid of a *national rivalry;* it did not therefore owe its origin entirely to the policy of William III.

It does not however admit of a doubt that the personal inclinations, and the position in which this monarch was placed, tended greatly to increase this rivalry, since he made its maintenance a principal maxim of his policy. Even in his youth (1672) he stood opposed as the champion of the Netherlands, to the great king of France[m], to whom he bore a personal hatred, which was in turn cherished against him by that monarch; and from that moment he seemed to live for the sole purpose of thwarting Louis, and became the life and soul of all the alliances which were formed against him. When raised to the throne of England he had to defend it against Louis, who took his rival under his pro-

[m] It is well known from the Memoirs of St. Simon, that this personal hatred arose from the refusal of William, when only prince of Orange, to accept the hand of one of Louis's natural daughters, which was offered him by her father. We should be careful however not to lay too much stress upon such anecdotes, even when true. The result would have been the same had this circumstance never occurred.

tection. The war, hastened as it was besides by many other causes, became thus unavoidable, and it wrapped nearly all Europe in flames, (1689—1697,) until at the peace of Ryswick Louis found it convenient to acknowledge William as king of England.

There is probably no other example of a rivalry between two civilised nations in which so many causes of jealousy are to be found, as those upon which that between England and France was founded. The interests of independence, of religion, and of commerce, were involved in an extraordinary manner with those of the sovereigns themselves. Is it then to be wondered at, that such a rivalry should become at the same time both violent and lasting? But it is time to follow out the consequences which it had on the subsequent continental interests of Britain; we shall thus trace the formation of many of the threads on which was wrought the whole web of the subsequent politics of Europe.

Alliances on the continent were, under the existing circumstances, absolutely necessary to England. It was a struggle with a power which at sea was about equal to her in strength, but which on land was infinitely superior; and which necessarily remained superior until it was discovered that an addition to the standing army was not at the same time a diminution of national freedom. England therefore dared not enter into a contest with France alone; and when this idea had once gained ground, it continued

even in times when its justice might well have been disputed, and thus became the governing principle of the continental policy of Great Britain.

An alliance therefore with that state which as a military power maintained the next rank to France, was an unavoidable consequence; and hence arose the close connection between England and Austria, a connection which may be considered as the true foundation of the British continental interests, and which, although for a time dissolved, was soon again renewed, and will probably be from time to time renewed as long as the rivalry between England and France continues to exist. As long as a branch of the house of Hapsburg reigned in Spain, this connection could not but lead to an alliance with that country, and this the rather as the plans of Louis were constantly directed against the Spanish Netherlands. But yet more important was the influence of the British policy upon the United Netherlands, now that their hereditary stadtholder was at the same time king of England; and hence arose the great alliance of Vienna, (1689,) in which England for the first time displayed in full force her vast influence upon the affairs of the continent. This alliance, and the ensuing war down to the treaty of Ryswick in 1697, gave to the politics of western Europe that character by which they were afterwards peculiarly distinguished. The alliance of the naval powers (England and Holland) with Aus-

tria, against that power which had become equally formidable on land and sea, forms the groundwork of the system, and the interests of these states so clearly demands such an alliance, that political sophistry will scarcely be able to prevail against it. All the states of the continent, which had learned by experience that Louis was desirous of increasing his power at their expense, if not of destroying them entirely, could not but see that this was the most natural means of defence; and it is clear from what we have above said, that the same applied to England.

Under these circumstances it resulted from the geographical situation of these states that the Spanish, afterwards Austrian Netherlands, became the centre of this alliance. They were in the first place, the chief aim of the policy of France: in the next, they were the connecting link between England and her continental allies. They formed the passage into Germany, the means of junction with the allied armies, and the conductor, so to say, by which the war might be drawn off from the principal countries of the Austrian monarchy; on their independence rested that of the United Provinces as well as of the German empire; and with all these points was connected the balance of political power in Europe. The maintenance of the Belgian provinces was therefore necessarily one of the leading maxims of the continental policy of England —a maxim in the support of which she has re-

peatedly and wisely exerted her best energies. While England was thus connecting herself on every side with the continent, it could not but follow that several smaller states should be drawn into these arrangements. But those only will require mention which were permanently involved in them, and amongst these the first is Savoy. In 1689 the fatal activity of Louvois first compelled the duke Victor Amadeus II. to take part in those tragic scenes which were now repeatedly acted in Europe; and the situation and condition of his territory, which was at once the gate and the bulwark of Italy, necessarily, when that country became the scene of action, gave this family a degree of importance which the political talents of its leaders turned with extraordinary dexterity, and still more extraordinary good fortune, to their own advantage. Of the remaining states of Italy, Naples being still a province, none was of sufficient importance to make an alliance with them possible; and with the individual princes of Germany it was not necessary to be at any pains, as the whole body generally followed its chief, and each of the great Austrian wars became a war of the empire.

By means of the war of 1689 therefore the relations in which England stood to the continent were first organised; and in her subsequent policy she merely continued to build on the foundation which was here laid. A proof of this is to be found in the Spanish war of suc-

cession, which followed only four years afterwards. By the negotiations which preceded it, England had become deeply involved in continental politics, and even if Louis XIV. had not forced her to war by recognising the pretender, contrary to the provisions of the treaty of Ryswick, she would scarcely have been able to preserve her neutrality. A contest was pending, upon the result of which, according to the principles of the policy of that time, whether just or not, depended the maintenance of the political balance in Europe.

The connections of England with the continent continued then during this war the same as during the last, with the exception of the altered circumstances of Spain; although their author did not live to see its commencement[n]. But the unaltered policy of his successor, Anne, notwithstanding the change which took place in the influential persons at court, affords the clearest proof that in spite of the clamour of parties during the reign of William III., the interests which he had pursued were not merely his own, but those of the nation. The alliance with Austria was the great link on which all the others depended, since not only the republic of the United Netherlands, although it had abolished the dignity of stadtholder, persevered in its previous policy, but the Germanic empire also took an active part in the war, and the duke of Savoy,

[n] William III. died March 19th, 1702.

although at first on the side of France, was soon won over by the allies. But still the war of succession in Spain modified the British continental policy in more than one respect, and at the same time increased its strength and its sphere of action; and it is necessary that these points should be more closely examined.

1st. The old connections, especially that with Austria, were greatly strengthened. The confederacy found (what alone can render any alliance formidable) chiefs who were capable of holding it together and infusing life and spirit into it. Where can history produce a duumvirate like that of Eugene and Marlborough? And when did any thing but success stamp such an alliance with durability? It is true the alliance fell to pieces towards the end of the war, but still it is an example without parallel that it should have lasted so long; and even that the dissolution was but temporary, and the tie was renewed as soon as circumstances demanded it.

2nd. One lasting consequence of that war was the close connection with Portugal; while this state trembled, and not without cause, for its independence, when a Bourbon ascended the throne of Spain, and therefore sought to unite itself with the allies, they on the other hand required its assistance in order to play their game with a probability of success, and to drive Philip of Anjou from his throne. This connection, however, springing as it did from the circumstances of the moment, would have been but

transitory, had it not been strengthened by other ties. This was done by means of the commercial treaty of the British minister, Methuen (1705), which granted a free entrance into Portugal for British manufactures, especially woollens; and for Portuguese wines into England. It is well known that scarcely any other treaty has been so advantageous to England, owing to the extraordinary wealth which this market had derived at that period from the newly-discovered gold mines of Brazil. Thus by the interweaving of political with commercial interests, arose that connection between England and Portugal which has not been broken by the most violent storms of revolution.

3rd. In the war of the Spanish succession, England first employed the granting of subsidies. The wealth of England and the financial system founded by the creation of the national debt, and the means thus afforded of obtaining unlimited credit under William III., must sooner or later have given rise to this, even were it not the character of great commercial nations to carry on their military enterprises, if they should be engaged in such to any extent, more or less with the aid of foreign troops received into their pay. Whether this be done by subsidies or by fairly taking troops into pay, the system remains in its principal features the same, and the consequences must be the same also. The Spanish war, continued as it unnecessarily was by the breaking off of the negotiations in 1709, gave a

dangerous example of the facility with which such wars may be protracted if the interest of the party at the helm of state demands it; but experience has also shown that the injury must necessarily recoil upon England itself.

4th. The conditions of the peace of Utrecht necessarily strengthened the continental relations of England, without however, except in the case of Spain, materially altering them. This was occasioned partly by the resignation by Spain of her European provinces, partly by the acquisitions which England made in America. The Spanish Netherlands now became the property of Austria, which thus became the natural ally of England; and when the Italian possessions were given up, partly to Austria, partly to Sardinia, new points of connection arose between these states and England, who had already by the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca gained a firm footing in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, the conditions of the treaty of Assiento with Spain, and the acquisition of Nova Scotia in North America, scattered the seeds of future wars; which however did not spring up until the following period.

From what has preceded, then, we conclude that, when the house of Hanover ascended the British throne, the continental interests of England were, in their leading features, already fixed. The rivalry with France was the foundation on which they were built; and as long as this lasts it will remain essentially the same, whatever

temporary changes may take place. The friendly connection which was formed under George I. seemed for a time to put an end to the rivalry; but it was only the consequence of a family dispute of the Bourbons, and with the dispute itself it ceased; as will appear in the consideration of the next period.

FIFTH PERIOD.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF THE HOUSE OF HANOVER TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, 1714-1789.

The continental relations of England under the house of Hanover became still closer and more complicated than they had previously been. Our inquiry will therefore lead us more deeply into the general system of Europe, and becomes proportionally more difficult, although at the same time more instructive; nay, perhaps we may add, more meritorious also, since this whole period of British history, however rich in materials, has not as yet found an historian worthy of it. Although therefore what may here be offered can only serve as a brief introduction to such a work, we shall still find it worth while to follow the history of this nation in one of its most important aspects, during this its most prosperous period; and perhaps at the same time to combat some prejudices which have arisen from partial views of the subject.

I believe that I have sufficiently established

in the first half of this inquiry, that when George I. ascended (1714) the British throne, the principal ties between England and the continent were already in existence. These however were now strengthened and some new ones added to them. The first and most important of these is generally considered to be the circumstance that the family which ascended the throne of England was possessed of hereditary dominions on the continent. That it is a totally false opinion which attributes to this the main foundation of the foreign policy of England, is clear from what has preceded; it certainly had its influence, exaggerated as this has been at particular periods by British authors, but an impartial estimate of its extent requires a more minute consideration of the political situation of George I. at his succession, as well in reference to his position at home, as in his relations to the remainder of Europe. The internal position of England must at that period have given rise to closer connections with the continent, even had not external circumstances led to the same result. Although the house of Hanover was called to the succession by the voice of the nation, it is well known how divided within itself the nation was—how thoroughly the parties of whig and tory became political factions, and what fierce convulsions were the consequence. There was a pretender with numerous adherents at home and powerful friends abroad. As long as he found foreign support, or there was even a

probability that he would do so, it was necessary to oppose his endeavours; and this opposition brought on a long chain of political connections with the continent. The existence, and what is more, the lengthened existence of such a pretender, who at least *might* obtain political influence, and at particular periods *did* actually obtain it; was a piece of signal good fortune to England itself as well as to the new government. The continued danger kept the government, as well as the nation, continually on their guard, and became one of the strongest ties between them. However deeply the conviction might be impressed upon the latter that the maintenance of their constitution depended upon the protestant succession, the great mass of the people were still in need of something to remind them of it; and what could be better calculated to secure this object, than the unceasing claims of a catholic pretender? And however great may have been the personal qualities, however pure the intentions, and however strong the attachment to the constitution, in the members of the new reigning family, still nothing would serve better than those very claims, to keep it constantly in their minds, that it was through the constitution, and for the constitution, that they were invested with their high dignity. Thus the king and the nation could not but agree in considering the constitution the palladium of their freedom to the latter, and of his throne to the former; thus the conviction natu-

rally grew upon them, that the interests of the king and the nation were inseparably the same; thus in a word the constitution escaped being considered a dead letter, and was impressed upon the hearts of the people and their rulers. But external circumstances were of yet more influence in strengthening the continental policy of England, by which it became deeply involved in the affairs both of eastern and western Europe.

The west of Europe had just emerged from a contest of thirteen years, in which the Spanish monarchy was the stake. This war had been sustained by an alliance, the soul of which was England, and which drooped and ended soon after England retired. The peace, in which she had secured to herself important advantages, however trifling they may have appeared in the eyes of the whigs, had been her work, and its maintenance was no less her interest. But hardly ever was there a more insecure peace than that of Utrecht; for between the two principal parties—Spain and Austria—there was no stipulation of peace, even though the distance between their dominions and the position of the remainder of Europe had really caused a cessation of hostilities. The loss of her European dependences in Italy and the Netherlands to Austria and Savoy, was not forgotten by Spain, and she was only waiting for an opportunity of seizing them again. The interests therefore of England and Austria coincided in the mainte-

nance of peace; and the connection between them consequently continued and was strengthened. But the circumstances which then took place in the house of Bourbon, procured for England another ally on the continent, and that in a nation against which all her powers had been but a short time before exerted, namely, France. Since the death of Louis XIV. (1715) affairs under the regency of the duke of Orleans took a very different turn from what had been expected. Instead of the close connection between the Bourbons of France and those of Spain which had been looked for, rivalry and strife arose which ultimately led to war. The weak health of the youthful king of France excited the expectation of a speedy vacancy of the throne of France. Who in this case was to be his successor? the regent, or the king of Spain, who had resigned for himself and his descendants all claims upon the French throne? The example of Louis XIV. however had shown how far such a resignation was binding. But it did not appear probable that the regent would suffer the sceptre to be wrested from him if the attempt was delayed till the death of the young king. It seemed much easier at once to deprive him of the regency; and this idea suggested itself the more readily to the Spanish minister Alberoni, since it agreed with his other plans for recovering the provinces which had been yielded to Austria and Savoy (especially those in Italy), and even for overthrowing the whole political system of Eu-

rope, by the elevation of the pretender to the throne of England. But the attempt to raise a conspiracy against their regent was betrayed and failed, and the recommencement of hostilities between Spain and France (1719) was the consequence of its discovery.

Under these circumstances it was natural that a connection should be formed between England and the regent; his interest and that of England were alike involved in the maintenance of the established order of things in Europe, as settled at the peace of Utrecht. He was compelled, in order to provide for his own security, to oppose the plans of Spain. On the other hand, however extraordinary it might seem that England and France should be allied, it is easy to perceive that no material alteration had taken place in the policy of England. Spain, under Alberoni, wished to rule as France had done under Louis XIV.; England was therefore guided by the same interest in offering a strong opposition to the plans of Spain, as that which had formerly engaged her in war with France. But other causes were added in reference to Spain, founded upon commercial advantages, which induced England to oppose that country, and (for it amounted to the same thing) to make the observance of the conditions of the peace of Utrecht the aim of her policy; and these were the great concessions made by Spain in the treaty of Assiento. By the provisions of this treaty, England obtained the right of furnishing

Spanish America with negro slaves for thirty years, and of sending annually a vessel of 500 tons to the great commercial fair of Portobello [o].

These privileges could not fail, on account of the smuggling to which they gave rise, of securing to England the greater part of the trade of Spanish America; and in proportion to the increase of profit, the British government became more anxious to ensure the continuance of them, by maintaining the peace. It would be superfluous to describe the events which after the year 1714 caused the fall of Alberoni, and upon it the accession of Spain to the quadruple alliance, and thus led to the attainment of this object.

Thus it becomes evident that the participation of England in the affairs of western Europe during the first half of the reign of George I., arose not merely from the personal interests of the monarch, but also from those of the nation. At that time there were as yet no designs upon the dominion of the sea; the only objects aimed at were the security of the balance of power—the confirmation of the advantages which had been gained by England—and the maintenance of the peace of Europe. The colonies however now began to exert an influence upon continental politics, which must not hereafter remain unnoticed.

[o] The fair of Portobello was at that time one of the most important in the world, as at it the European goods required by the South American provinces of Spain were exchanged for the gold and silver of Peru.

But while the British cabinet was thus active in the west, new connections arose in the east. The great war which had laid waste the northern part of this quarter of the globe for one-and-twenty years (1700—1721) was not without its influence on England. George I. has been represented in almost all the histories of England, as having upon this occasion exchanged the king for the elector; and for the sake of his German territories permitted himself to be mixed up, as king of England, in the strife which took place. We ought therefore to attempt what there is no longer any reason to prevent, viz. an impartial consideration of the question, how far the interest of the English nation required this interference of the king? how far the interests of the nation were the same as those of the electorate? and how far the consequences were advantageous or the reverse to Great Britain?

It has already been shown that England had long been no indifferent spectator of the proceedings of the northern powers. The trade in the Baltic was the cause of this; and after it became considerable, the English could remain as little indifferent upon the subject as the Dutch, with whom they shared it, though at that time very unequally. Besides, the geographical situation of the Baltic, which can only be reached by narrow straits, one only of which, the Sound, is perfectly navigable, made it by no means a matter of indifference in whose possession this

passage, and with it the means of entering this sea, should be.

If any single power obtained the dominion, if, as had more than once happened in the times of the Swedish monarchy, any single state arose with such power as either actually to close that entrance, or by the imposition of heavy tolls virtually to effect the same object, that branch of the commerce and navigation of both England and Holland could not but become in the highest degree precarious. The active interference of England in the affairs of the north commenced therefore during the period of the Swedish dominion, when that state began to menace Denmark; and the maintenance of a certain balance, or at least the preservation of both powers was the object which this interference had in view. It is true that besides negotiation, England, owing to her situation, had no means of giving succour except by her fleets; but the position of the two states, which made it necessary that a war between them, if undertaken in earnest, should be carried on by sea as well as land, rendered this kind of assistance very important, and might even do what in naval expeditions very rarely is the case, viz. make it decide the event. The internal disturbances which distracted England towards the close of the thirty years' war, rendered an active intervention in favour of Denmark, then menaced by Sweden, impossible. Denmark however was re-

lieved by the peace of Brömsebroe (1645). It was in Cromwell's time however that attention was first directed to these affairs: nay, as we have previously shown, his designs went even to the acquisition by England of possessions on the shores of the Baltic. When Charles Gustavus of Sweden threatened the total annihilation of Denmark (1657) England strenuously took her part, and procured the peace of Roschild (Feb. 26, 1658); and when that monarch suddenly broke the conditions and besieged Copenhagen, not only did England join the confederacy at the Hague, but English vessels accompanied the Dutch fleet to the Baltic, and by a victory over the Swedish fleet contributed much to the relief of Copenhagen (1659). The trade with the Baltic and the maintenance of the previous tolls at the Sound, are the causes assigned for this interference in the treaty which was then made[p].

The change which shortly afterwards was effected in England by the restoration of the king, not only did not diminish, but even increased the share which England had taken in these affairs. The trade with the Baltic was considered to be of such importance, that it was regulated by new conditions with Sweden as well as Denmark, and these continue to this day to be the groundwork of the mutual commerce of these countries. The treaty with Sweden was concluded by Charles II. (1661) with the re-

[p] Vide Schmauss *Einleitung zu der Staatswissenschaft*, vol. ii. p. 129.

gency during the minority of Charles XI., and altered in some particulars in the year 1666; that with Denmark not till the year 1671[q]. In both these treaties it was especially provided what articles should be considered contraband, in order to avoid any interruption to the trade during times of war. But the attention of England was now especially engaged by the constant endeavours of Holland to obtain the whole of the trade; and owing to this, the relations in which the two states stood to each other, usually had their influence upon the north. A clear proof of this is afforded by the negotiations which took place during the war (1665—1667), which was ended by the treaty of Breda. Holland then gained over Denmark as well as Sweden, and the entrance into the Baltic was to have been entirely forbidden to England[r]. But the peace of Breda (1667) which soon ensued, and the new and more important occurrences in western Europe, when Louis XIV. commenced his wars in the Netherlands, altered these political relations and prevented any consequences which the above negotiations might have had.

The ambitious designs of Louis extended themselves even to the north; and when France succeeded in winning over Sweden, Denmark also

[q] They are to be found in Schmauss *Corpus Juris Gentium*, vol. ii. pp. 753 and 2328.

[r] Result of the treaty concluded at the Hague between Holland and Denmark, Feb. 11, 1666.—Schmauss, *Staatswissenschaft*, vol. ii. p. 178.

followed; but the war did not become a naval one, and had no reference to commerce. It will only be necessary to bear in mind the internal affairs of England under Charles II., James II., and William III., in order to account for the circumstance that her policy was less frequently directed towards the north during these reigns.

But the great northern war, which, after continuing twenty years, entirely changed the relations of northern Europe, could not fail of engaging the attention of England. The proof of this is found in the peace of Travendal, (1700,) which was concluded between Sweden and Denmark through the mediation of England, and guaranteed by her. The war of the Spanish succession, which immediately afterwards set the whole of western Europe in flames, and which England carried on by land with a degree of vigour and good fortune never before witnessed, made it impossible that she could interfere with energy in the affairs of the north. She contented herself with watching the proceedings of the Swedish hero, and was only anxious lest it should enter into his head to become the ally of France, and strike in with the sword in her behalf. But when by the peace of Utretcht (1713) she was released from this contest, it could not but be expected that she should again become active in that quarter.

But it was no easy question for England to determine what side she should put herself on. All the former relations had been changed; Sweden

was exhausted, and while Russia was rapidly developing her strength, the balance between Sweden and Denmark was no longer the only thing to be considered. But in what point of view was England to regard this growth of Russia in reference to her own interests? On the one side it could not be a matter of indifference to British policy, that a power should be forming itself in the north, which not only threatened the independence and existence of all the other states, but was even directly bent upon becoming a great naval force, and thus grasping the dominion of the Baltic. On the other hand it required no great foresight to perceive, more or less clearly, the advantages which would result to England from the civilisation of Russia. An acquaintance with the arts and the wants of luxury in a state of such immense extent, laid open an inexhaustible market to the manufacturing and trading nations of Europe; and although it could not then be foreseen what a preponderance England would afterwards obtain by the decay of Dutch commerce, it was very clear that she could not be wholly shut out from these advantages. But the measures adopted did not, as it appears, proceed from such general considerations. No care was taken of the future, and temporary relations only were looked to. Single opportunities were seized as they presented themselves, and thus England became involved in the question without having any fixed system to guide herself by. The extension

of the northern war into Germany, in which George I. became concerned, as elector of Hanover, gave the first occasion of interference.

Sweden had been deprived by her enemies of almost all her German possessions, and of these more particularly, the duchies of Bremen and Verden, which she had obtained by the peace of Westphalia, had fallen into the hands of the Danes. Denmark sold these territories to Hanover, in a treaty which was signed June 26th, 1715. As Sweden would not recognise this sale, nay more, as Charles XII. made it no secret that his whole efforts were directed towards regaining as far as possible the supremacy in northern Germany, the implication of Hanover in the northern war would have been a natural consequence, even if it had not been expressly stipulated in the treaty that George I. should declare war against Sweden[s]. This he did in his character of elector of Hanover, and it was only in this character that he carried it on by land; but at the same time a squadron of eight English men of war was sent to the Sound, which joined the Danish fleet[t]. It was not without cause that Charles XII. complained of this last step, which led however to no important results; nor did he in the bitter hatred which he bore to George I. distinguish be-

[s] The state papers are to be found in *Mémoires de Lamberti*, vol. ix. p. 229.

[t] The British admiral put himself in those days under the orders of the Danish commander. Such are the changes which occur!

tween the king and the elector, but sought his revenge by no less formidable means than a revolution in England in favour of the pretender; and this his minister, baron Gorz, actually planned, but was unable to execute.

In the mean while the great impediments which arose to the commerce of the Baltic during the war, afforded England opportunities for complaint. No power ever carried commercial restrictions against his enemies so far as Charles XII. did in his regulations[u]. It is true he had extraordinary inducements to such a course. It was according to the existing relations his chief interest by all means to prevent Russia from excelling him as a naval force; and yet it was to this that Peter especially devoted himself; and he was able as early as 1716 to make his appearance in the Baltic with a fleet superior to that of Sweden. The neutral powers, and especially Holland, assisted him in many ways. The great advantage to be gained by it induced them not only to furnish him with all other necessaries which he required, but even to supply vessels completely equipped, and which could be used as ships of war. On this were founded the severe measures of Charles, which were directed in the first place against the Dutch, but which fell also upon the English, and would almost have annihilated their commerce

[u] See his edicts of Feb. 8, and Dec. 19, 1715. LAMBERTI, vol. ix. p. 228.

with the Baltic had they not protected it by armed vessels. The interest of George I. as elector of Hanover, was therefore not the only cause which induced him to adopt measures against Charles, for he had grounds of complaint also in his character of king of England. Nevertheless it is the constant reproach of all English writers, that he did not distinguish between these two interests; but that the wish to preserve the duchies of Bremen and Verden, by which a communication was opened between his new kingdom and his German territories, led him to implicate England in the contests of the northern states.

It would not be difficult, from what has been already said, to find grounds of defence for George I.; but allowing every one to form his own judgment upon this point, there remains another ground which has not been taken by any English historian with whom I am acquainted, and which is the most important of all in the determination of the controversy—I refer to the question whether the interests of England or Hanover were most nearly concerned in the acquisition of Bremen and Verden? And I believe it will not be difficult to prove that the former were chiefly involved in it.

Hanover certainly gained at a sufficiently cheap rate two provinces, one of little importance, the other more so, yet neither remarkably fertile, except in those parts which border on the rivers. But then, the latter of the two com-

mands the entrance into the two principal rivers, and consequently the chief commercial approaches of northern Germany; and thus by its geographical situation becomes of very great importance. By the electorate, a country which has not one sea-port nor any commercial town of moment, which exports comparatively little, and the exports of which, as they are objects which are not generally classed among contraband commodities, there could not easily be found causes to interfere with, little was gained; but this made the advantages to England all the greater. From the time that the province which commands the mouths of those streams, and with them the two principal sea-ports of Germany, became annexed to the dominions of her king, these roads of commerce were permanently open to England; the communication with Germany no longer depended on political circumstances; she had no longer any cause to fear that her exports would be either excluded from the continent or admitted under the disadvantages of increased duties; and a fair prospect was opened to her of securing the commerce of the whole of northern Germany.

In order to comprehend the truth of this, we must view the case not according to present circumstances, but those of that time. In the state of alienation which then existed between England and Sweden, it was but too certain that Charles would seize the first opportunity of vengeance. Let us suppose he had succeeded in

recovering himself,—and this, considering the reconciliation which he was on the point of effecting with Russia, was far from impossible,—and had regained possession of his German territories, would not these rivers, as well as the entrance into the Baltic, have been closed, either immediately or on every future quarrel, and privateers have been fitted out for the purpose of infesting that as well as the northern sea?

But these advantages must have appeared the more important to England at that time, in proportion to the power of the rivals with whom she had to cope. England was then far from having the greatest share in the commerce of Germany, especially upon the Weser and Elbe. The Dutch unquestionably still retained the superiority. In order therefore to be able to compete with them with a hope of equalling or surpassing them, that acquisition was of the greatest importance. It would be easy to point out other advantages, such as the power of sending troops to and from Germany unimpeded, and the like, which were secured to England, the importance of which depended upon political circumstances as they arose.

From all this I think it has been made clear, —and more was not intended,—that those British authors who make the share which George I. took in the affairs of the north an occasion of reproach, embrace a very narrow view of the subject. Still it remains true, that he did not

act on fixed political principles, but that his conduct was the result of circumstances with the changes of which he changed also. Charles XII. fell in the trenches[o]; his minister, his friend and counsellor, was compelled to ascend the scaffold; and with them was destroyed the whole fabric of their policy, at the very time when it was upon the point of completion. It is known that this was founded upon a reconciliation with Russia, the equivalent of which was to be obtained at the expense of other enemies, especially of Denmark. The new party who came into power would not prosecute this plan, because it had been formed by Görz, whom they hated; but if Charles XII. with his iron arm and iron determination was not able to maintain himself alone, what could be expected from the government which succeeded him? Nothing therefore remained upon the rupture with Russia, but to seek assistance from those powers against whom it had been intended to turn their whole forces; and the first of these was England. The treaty formed with George I. as elector of Hanover, in which Sweden for a sum of money yielded up Bremen and Verden, led the way to this; and was shortly succeeded by a treaty of alliance[p] with England, expressly di-

[o] Dec. 11th, 1718; and as soon after as Feb. 28, 1719, Görz was judicially murdered.

[p] Peace was concluded with Hanover, Nov. 20, 1719; and on Jan. 21, 1720, followed the alliance with England.

rected against Russia, and in which assistance by land as well as by sea was stipulated for, in order to set bounds to the devastating inroads of the Czar.

If the consequences of their political errors proved so disastrous to the Swedes, the change in the policy of England admitted perhaps of some palliation, on the ground that she wished to repress the fearful aggrandizement of Russia, and to uphold the balance of power in the north.

But if this was her object, she embarked in an undertaking which she could not accomplish, and even at that early period exhibited a proof how little she was able at any time to form a correct estimate of her own power, or to determine the precise sphere of her influence. The only way in which she could injure Russia was by obstructing for a time the navigation of the Baltic. But this was surely not sufficient to retard the growth of its power. And as to maintaining the political balance in the north, it was now, generally speaking, too late. Besides, when Russia at the peace of Nystadt had effected the separation of the finest lands on the Baltic from Sweden, viz. Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, and a part of Courland, what support, however powerful, could have sustained Sweden in a position to preserve the balance of power against Russia?

By the peace of Nystadt then, nothing, it is true, was definitively settled respecting England;

it was nevertheless the foundation of her continental policy in the north. As the consequences of this peace developed themselves slowly, but on this account the more surely, in the growing prosperity of Russia; as not only her exports increased in consequence of her possessing the principal port in the Baltic, but from the spread of European luxury, her internal consumption was also augmented, so the conviction that this was by no means a questionable but in the highest degree an advantageous result to England, developed itself more and more in that country; the market for British manufactures becoming thereby so much the more extensive, and the trade to the Baltic daily more important. On the other hand, the augmentation of the British navy caused in turn a proportionate demand abroad for the materials requisite in ship-building, especially timber and hemp, both of which the immense territory of Russia offered in the greatest profusion. In a word, both countries were becoming every day more and more indispensable to each other; not in prosecuting a common war, but in supplying each other's wants; a bond of union far more durable than any treaties of alliance.

Under these relations the British continental policy in the north necessarily assumed more of a passive than an active character. The good understanding between England and Russia was indispensable to both parties; and there was nothing at that time which seemed likely

to disturb this amicable connection. Even when the occasional re-action upon the north of Europe of the political events of the west might have excited such apprehensions, they passed away without any important consequences. This state of things lasted till Russia took a direct and vigorous part, not only in the affairs of the north and east, but also in those of the west and south of Europe. This intervention necessarily gave birth to some new features in the British continental policy in the north, as will be seen in the sequel of this inquiry.

The happy influence which the formation of the quadruple alliance produced on the west of Europe, had not only implicated England as closely as possible in the political relations to which it gave rise, but one might even say that she became and continued the moving power in them. The attempt to force upon Spain the acceptance of the conditions prescribed by this alliance did not, it is true, after the fall of Alberoni, re-establish any permanent peace, but still it restored tranquillity (Jan. 26, 1720;) the points still in dispute were to be decided at a general congress. Under these circumstances it might be expected that England should take a most lively interest in the affairs of the continent; but yet she did not do so to the extent anticipated.

Political activity and negotiation had become a necessary resource to George I. It is possible

that he was at first led by the ambition of showing that it was not merely the government of a small but of a large state to which he had succeeded, and that his growing power enabled him to participate in the direction of the common interests of Europe; but once deeply involved in these interests he could not easily have drawn back without compromising both himself and his kingdom, even though his inclination might have prompted him to do so. But in addition to this at that very juncture (April, 1721) the reins of government were held and retained for twenty-one years in succession, by a minister, whose disposition, in this respect, coincided with that of his master, not it is true in evading the war, but in employing every method which negotiations and demonstrations could supply to avoid it. Such a course of policy might have been expected from the long and almost uniformly peaceful administration of Robert Walpole.

The continental relations of England always require to be considered in two points of view: first, as regards their advantageous or pernicious influence on England itself; and, secondly, in relation to the whole system of European policy. In the British cabinet the first question had of course at all times a preponderating weight. We shall therefore contemplate our subject-matter first of all in this aspect; but nothing shall on that account prevent us from

surveying it likewise in the other, and from noting the points of agreement and difference which they respectively present.

It cannot be denied that if we examine the British policy in the last years of George I., we are unable to trace any fixed plan of proceeding. An insular state which takes an interest in the affairs of continental powers, can only do so by virtue of a federative system established on sound principles of policy, and followed up with firmness. We have seen how the links of this connection have hitherto been concentrated in England. But at the period of which we are speaking, those links were so wonderfully complicated, that the principles on which they were founded seemed to be forgotten. The connection with France was renewed, that with Austria dissolved, while the confederacies in the north were determined by the influence of the combinations formed in the west. The ignorance of the real designs of the foreign states, which we so often see occasion to impute to the British cabinet, manifested itself at this time in a remarkable manner. Justice, however, requires us also to observe, that the relations of the continental powers to each other were not the less variable and uncertain, because they were for the most part determined by the excitement of a personal and angry hatred.

To this cause we must ascribe the wavering policy which characterised those times, and which could not possibly continue without exercising

some influence upon England. Nevertheless in all the activity of the British cabinet at that period, we discover one dominant principle, which was in the highest degree beneficial, not only to England, but to Europe at large. This principle was the maintenance of peace. The only question is whether it always adopted the right method to secure this object.

One result of this policy was the congress at Cambray, which began to assemble under the arbitration of England and France, in order to separate again, after long delays and fruitless negotiations, without any decisive issue. Here the old dispute between Austria and Spain should have terminated; the recent feuds also, especially that about the plaything of Charles VI., the Indian company at Ostend, which became the object of a general outcry to the other commercial states, as soon as their highest interests became affected by it, ought to have been here laid aside; in a word, the whole evil should have been now rooted out.

But history nowhere affords a more striking instance of the truth, that large conventions are generally fruitless, nay, often in the highest degree prejudicial, unless they are directed by great men, who know how to raise themselves above petty passions, and to view and treat every question, whether great or small, with strict regard to its merits and proportions. The voices of the arbitrators swelled the note of discord which was raised about the most trivial cir-

cumstance; the passions were not calmed, but excited from the first; and the congress could scarcely have terminated otherwise than it did, even if other circumstances had not intervened to dissolve it.

It is melancholy to observe how much the politics of almost the whole of Europe were, at that time, determined by the proposed, though ineffectually proposed, marriage of a child; and how little was wanting to renew the flames of a general war. A Spanish princess, then just twelve months old, was fixed upon by the quadruple alliance, for the consort of Louis XV., and had been sent to Paris, where she was brought up. The duke of Bourbon, the minister of France had, however, private grounds for wishing a speedy consummation of the marriage of the young prince, which, owing to the age of the princess, could scarcely have been brought about in less than ten years. He was, therefore, anxious to procure for Louis a consort of a marriageable age, which he found in the daughter of the ex-king of Poland, Stanislaus Lescinsky; and the Spanish princess was sent back. This event, which could, under no circumstances, be otherwise than mortifying, produced the highest degree of rancour and resentment in the haughty mind of Elizabeth, who felt herself insulted, both as a mother and a queen[q]. Yet, owing to the

[q] Elizabeth of Parma was, as is well known, the second consort of king Philip V., having become so in 1715, and the legitimate heiress of the Spanish throne. Her first object was to secure the succession, which pro-

friendly connection between France and England, it would have been the height of rashness to hazard a rupture with France, especially since a reconciliation with Austria had not yet been completely effected by the congress at Cambray. Indeed, it was hardly to be expected, from the state in which men's minds then were, that such a reconciliation should have been accomplished at a congress. The consequence was, that a resolution was speedily formed in Spain, of establishing a direct connection with Austria.

This attempt was by no means exceptionable in itself; it could hardly fail of success, since a clear understanding had been arrived at long before, during the peace, on some of the main points of difference, namely, the concessions which were mutually demanded, and no collision of interest had occured in other points; but still, neither in the choice of a mediator, nor in the general conduct of the proceeding, was a sufficient degree of caution resorted to. Never, since their difference with Austria was virtually arranged by the treaty of Vienna, on April 30th, 1725, and the treaty of commerce, which immediately followed it, could it have been more essentially necessary by a provident and careful policy to tranquillise the fears which must have arisen among the foreign powers in consequence of

perly belonged to the sons of the first marriage, to her own children; in consequence of which Spain was precipitated into more than one war. The prospect of seeing her daughter on the French throne was a principal part of her plan, which was now frustrated.

this unexpected result. But the business of pacification was committed to the duke of Ripperda, one of the vainest braggarts that ever existed[r]; who, intoxicated by his unexpected good fortune, knew so little how to conduct himself in such a change of circumstances, that he very soon brought about his own ruin. The senseless behaviour of this man, who now considered himself the first statesman in Europe, his arrogance and haughty bearing towards the ambassadors of foreign powers, caused a crisis in the affairs of Spain, the issue of which promised much more of war than peace.

This reconciliation of Spain and Austria, roused all the political energies of George I. into activity. Almost the only provision of special interest contained in it was that which it had always been the policy of England to promote, viz. the complete ratification of the peace of Utrecht and a defensive Alliance. But the opinion prevailed that it contained much more than it really did. The public mind was anxious for information about secret stipulations, which were said to be especially directed against England, so as not only to secure Gibraltar to Spain[s] and the establishment of his Ostend company to Charles VI., but even to place the Pretender on the British throne; for in which of the political

[r] He was in fact a native of Holland, whom Alberoni had brought as a manufacturer to Spain. After his fall he wandered about as an adventurer in Turkey.

[s] Spain certainly made claims upon Gibraltar, but Charles VI. had only promised his mediation.

negotiations of that period could this bugbear be dispensed with? The sequel showed that it was a mere phantom which caused the alarm; the British cabinet had not informed itself with accuracy as to the true state of things, it gave credit to rumours and hearsays; but the consequences of its conduct were serious in the extreme.

The supposed new Offensive Alliance was to be met by a counter-alliance, which George I., during his residence in his German territories, concluded with France and Prussia at Herren-haus (Sept. 3rd, 1725.) Yes! these political convulsions extended even to the remotest regions of the north. Austria succeeded in attaching to itself Russia, and at first Sweden also. In order to have a counterpoise here likewise, the allies of Herren-haus obtained Denmark; and Sweden, also, was soon induced, by the promise of subsidies, to join their confederation. This was truly an era of confederacies! But far from erecting them on the basis of mutual and well-defined interests, they founded them on relations which could not possibly be durable. England separated itself from Austria, the only continental power in the south of Europe with which it could be connected by any permanent interests. It leagued itself with France and Prussia. The consequences could not be long restrained. Frederic William I. immediately afterwards entered into various negotiations with Austria; from the prospect of private advantage which

he saw, or imagined he saw, in the opening of the dukedoms of Berg and Julich, which might soon be expected, with the view of procuring these possessions for himself.

In the event, however, war, on an extensive scale, seemed likely to be the result of this confederation of Herren-haus. England fitted out three fleets, of which one was sent to the West Indies, another to Gibraltar, and the third to the Baltic. The first two were, therefore, directed against Spain, which, on her part, already began to lay siege to Gibraltar; the third was designed for the support of Denmark and Sweden, in the event of any movement on the part of Russia. But these hostile demonstrations produced no very serious consequences, since some good genius still stifled the flame of war just as it seemed on the point of breaking out.

Europe was indebted for this in a great measure to the ministerial change which occurred in France, 1726. Cardinal Fleury became premier when the Duke of Bourbon fell; and introduced into the French ministry dispositions, not less pacific than Walpole had infused into the British. The negotiations which were more particularly directed by papal nuncios, took a favourable turn; and one of the main stumbling-blocks was removed, when Charles VI. consented to suspend for seven years his Ostend commercial company. George I. lived just long enough to know that the preliminaries of peace had been signed at Paris and Vienna, to which Spain also

acceded after some difficulty: and in consequence of which, England recalled her fleets, but on condition that Spain should consent to raise the siege of Gibraltar[t]; and by the treaty at Pardo, (a palace near Madrid,) they were presently ratified by both powers[u]. But a few days after the conclusion of those preliminaries, viz., on June 22nd, 1727, George I. died during a tour in his German territories.

The foregoing examination, will, it is hoped, suffice for forming a general opinion of the continental policy of England under George I., and for determining with greater precision the effect which it produced, as well upon the political fabric of Europe in general, as upon England in particular. The interference of England under George I, was manifestly attended with beneficial results to the whole political system of Europe. The preservation of peace was its object, and peace was either maintained or restored. To what protracted and sanguinary wars must the execution of Alberoni's project in all probability have led, if England had not mediated a peace, and maintained it by means of the quadruple alliance, which it was mainly instrumental in constructing! The execution of those projects, inasmuch as they involved the reconquest of lost provinces, would have been as little a subject of congratulation to Europe as it would probably have been to Spain itself; which had so

[t] June 13th, 1727. [u] March 6th, 1728.

repeatedly learned by dear bought experience the cost of distant provinces. The war in the north had been terminated through the intervention of England; and though it was impossible for England to re-establish a counterbalancing power in this quarter, Sweden was at all events maintained in the rank of independent states, from which, without assistance, it would probably have disappeared.

It must be allowed that England itself did not acquire any new possessions by its continental relations, (though I think it has been clearly proved that the acquisition of Bremen and Verden were important to it,) but it gained advantages of another description which were by no means inconsiderable.

In the first place it secured the succession of the house of Hanover on the British throne. The voice of the nation has proclaimed this too loudly and unanimously as the most important feature of its returning prosperity to require any detailed proof; the only question which can possibly arise, is whether this was a consequence of its continental relations? It may perhaps be objected on the other hand, that the attempts to re-establish the Pretender on the throne originated in the interference of England in the affairs of the continent. But as long as the Stuarts had or might have powerful friends abroad, could the new dynasty safely dispense with such aid? The throne of the Hanoverian house was by no means so secure as to supersede

the necessity of accepting every available offer of support. But it was more peculiarly the good understanding which existed for so long a period with France, which was of such infinite service to them in this emergency. France was the principal, perhaps the only power which by supporting the Pretender could in any material degree endanger the security of the new dynasty. And surely the favourable opportunity which was thus presented to the new family of negotiating its private interests by means of this connection without compromising those of the nation at large, was a piece of good fortune not to be neglected. Further than this—By the active share which England took on this occasion she maintained that high consideration in the political system of Europe, which she had acquired during the reign of William and Anne. It does not require much sagacity to perceive of how much influence the public estimation of a state must be in such a system as that of Europe. The conduct of others is regulated by it, just as we see it among individuals in private life. Even fallen states have often for a considerable time experienced the benefits of its support; as for example, Venice and the Porte; but even a state which is but on the rise cannot afford to be indifferent to it. Even though no positive advantage should be gained by this public estimation, yet the negative effect is invalulable, since no measure of importance is undertaken without the knowledge of such a state,

and therefore none can be easily undertaken which is opposed to it and its interests. We cannot adduce a better illustration of this truth than by comparing the Republic of the United Netherlands with England, at the period of which we are treating and still propose to treat. The latter state laid it down as a fundamental principle of her policy after the peace of Utrecht, to keep herself as much aloof as possible from all foreign transactions, or only to take part in them when absolutely compelled. She continued to maintain for some time longer her position in public estimation among the states of the first order. By degrees, however, she began to sink lower and lower in the scale, and experience has shown the result to which this eventually led.

Lastly, the continuance of peace was another result to England of her continental policy, and assuredly not the least considerable. It not only secured to her the quiet enjoyment of the advantages derived from her Spanish commerce, but also those arising from intercourse with her colonies in America and the West Indies, which at that very time were becoming prosperous in the extreme, and to which the annually increasing consumption of West Indian produce, particularly of coffee, began to impart a value which no one could have anticipated. Still the times had not then arrived (as they since have) for such an increase in the power of England as to enable her to carry on her trade, even during war, comparatively without molestation.

But though all this may demonstrate the soundness of the British continental policy in *general* during the reign of George I., it will not by any means vindicate every single measure which was resorted to in pursuance of it. It cannot be denied, that particularly in the last six years of this monarch's reign, the interference of the British cabinet in the affairs of the continent, assumed the character of over-activity without at the same time maintaining that stability which is the indispensable condition of all durable alliances. It cannot be denied, that precipitate measures were sometimes adopted, particularly those occasioned by the league of Herren-haus, which, without a concurrence of fortunate circumstances, which were beyond the control of England, would in all probability have caused disastrous consequences. To this period we may perhaps ascribe the illusion that she was able by her fleets to accomplish more than the nature of things permits; so likewise the notion of deriving great advantages from the subsidies which she furnished, was then at least entertained, though it had not as yet any serious consequences.

Important changes in the ministry were expected on the death of the king (1727.) These anticipations, however, were not realised; Walpole, supported by the credit of queen Caroline, continued prime minister. It could scarcely have been expected therefore, that the spirit of the British continental policy should be mate-

rially altered during the first years of George II.'s reign. But though no immediate changes ensued, the alteration which took place in the political relations of the continent, caused a corresponding alteration in those of England, which ought not to pass unobserved.

When George II. ascended the throne, the amicable relations subsisting between England and France remained in all their force. The character of the two premiers, Fleury and Walpole, were too well suited to each other to admit readily of a change. Both were intent upon the preservation of peace, and their union was still more strongly cemented by the brother of the British minister, Horatio Walpole, in the character of ambassador at Paris. Prussia, the other ally of Herren-haus, had, as we have before remarked, already entered into separate negotiations with Austria; the republic of the United Netherlands stood on a most friendly footing with England and France; accustomed as Europe was to see the republic take part in all her great confederations, it was now taken for granted that no association could be formed without its concurrence; while the republic itself, intent upon the preservation of peace, thought it could never employ sufficient precaution in pursuit of this object. With regard to the confederate powers, Spain and Austria, negotiations had been opened with the former of them, which though at first they appeared to take an unfavourable turn, owing to the death

of the king, were soon restored to their former course, by the continuance in office of the Walpole administration, and were brought to asuccessful issue by the treaty at Pardo. Since the scheme of the Ostend company had been suspended, it appeared as though friendly relations might be renewed with Austria likewise; but, new events intervening, this was prevented, or at least delayed.

The British cabinet at that time evidently set a much higher value upon the friendship of Spain than on that of Austria. The temporary advantages derivable from the secure possession of Gibraltar and Minorca, the profitable trade with Spain itself, and, above all, with its American possessions, guaranteed as it was by existing treaties, seemed to claim a paramount importance. But this friendship could not well be maintained without entering into the interested plans of the queen of Spain for the advancement of her children, and thus hazarding giving offence to Austria. However the prospect of advantage derivable to England from a separation of the two powers, Austria and Spain, overcame this consideration. By the conditions of the quadruple alliance Tuscany, with Parma and Placentia, were secured to the queen of Spain for her elder son Don Carlos, as soon as their projected opening should be completed—till which time they were to remain in the occupation of neutral troops. But apprehensive that obstacles might be thrown in her way, she wished

to secure the immediate possession of them, and Spanish troops were sent into them as a garrison. England entered into these plans, and although they were an infraction of the quadruple alliance, without consulting or apprising Austria, joined with France in concluding a treaty with Spain at Seville,[x] in which it was not only permitted to Spain thus to act, but even England rendered itself liable to contribute towards sending Don Carlos into those provinces with 6000 Spanish troops. The most violent indignation on the part of Austria was the natural result of these proceedings. But, however much incensed Austria may have felt, however loudly she protested that she would not tolerate any foreign troops in this quarter, Walpole nevertheless succeeded in calming her resentment. His plan was to endeavour to steer his way clear between two rocks, and he succeeded. When the more dangerous alternative of the two, viz. a breach with Spain, had been eluded—his next point was to avoid the other. But Walpole knew the talisman by which the opposition of Charles VI. might be charmed away. Whoever recognised his order of succession in favour of his daughter, his Pragmatic Sanction, might always calculate upon gaining him over, and even inducing him to make a sacrifice of his own interest. At this price Walpole, by quietly negotiating with Austria as he had just

[x] Nov. 9, 1729.

before done with Spain, obtained the formal abolition of the Ostend company for England, and the promise of the investiture of Tuscany and Parma, with permission to send Spanish troops thither for Spain; and the treaty of Vienna was concluded on the 16th of March, 1731.

In any continental state Walpole would with such a policy as this in all probability have failed. England was now in friendship with all the world without possessing a single true friend in the political sense of the term. The friendship of Spain could not be permanent, since a growing cause of differences lay hid in their commercial relations; the friendship of France was now growing cold in consequence of the treaty of Vienna, which had been concluded without her participation; to counteract which Fleury not only re-established the good understanding with Spain, but likewise showed his skill in strengthening it. The renewed friendship with Austria required under such relations to be severely tried before its sincerity could be depended upon. England had engaged herself in a tissue of treaties, out of which it seemed scarcely possible she should extricate herself. Had she been prepared to fulfil all her engagements, scarcely a war could have arisen in any quarter of Europe in which she would not have been implicated, nay, in which she would not have been obliged to furnish auxiliaries in several quarters at once. But an insular state has certainly in such cases great advantages over

every other. Its position gives it in every case the best chance of keeping clear of the struggle; and how many resources may not be discovered when time is allowed, by which we may extricate ourselves from difficulties, without being directly unfaithful to our engagements! It is a sure rule, that an insular state, in its connections with continental powers, always stakes less upon the game than is staked by them in their connections with it. Probably, however, Walpole was not influenced by such considerations as these. He was not a man who built his policy on general grounds, or who looked very far into futurity. His object was the preservation of peace; and he cared not through what obstacles he had to steal his way towards the attainment of this object, provided he was only so fortunate as to avoid each as it occurred.

The truth of these observations is strikingly corroborated by the events which occurred in Europe in the following years. The throne of Poland, which had been vacated by the death of Augustus II.[y], plunged the greater part of the continent of Europe into a war, in which the occupation of this throne was to the majority of those engaged but the pretext of their interference. Charles VI. was guilty of the folly of taking part with Russia and Prussia, in favour of Augustus III., in order to obtain from Saxony the recognition of his Pragmatic Sanction, and

[y] Feb. 1, 1733.

thus armed the Bourbon powers with weapons which they might wield against himself. Attacked by France, Spain, and Savoy, Charles VI. saw himself stripped within the space of a year of all his Italian possessions, while at the same time the banks of the Rhine became the scene of the war in Germany.

After so many previous negotiations and so many connections contracted in every quarter, who could have expected that England at such a crisis, when her most recent allies were the objects of attack, would have remained neutral. There was no backwardness on the part of Austria in demanding assistance; but as the treaty with this power was only a defensive treaty there was not much difficulty in evading it. England, in connection with Holland, confined herself therefore to that which touched her most nearly, the maintenance of the neutrality[z] of the Austrian Netherlands, and generally to making proposals of peace which however were not accepted. The issue is well known. France concluded the preliminaries of the treaty of Vienna with Austria without any interruption from England[a]. It acquired for itself in return for the bare promise of recognising the Pragmatic Sanction, the dukedom of Lorraine; and the queen of Spain was eventually contented to accept the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, in lieu of Parma and Tuscany, for her son Don Carlos,

[z] By a treaty with France at the Hague, Nov. 24, 1733.

[a] October 3, 1735.

in hope of recovering also at the first opportunity the other Italian territories for her second son.

The course pursued by Walpole during the progress of these events, was perhaps most consistent with the momentary advantages of England, but it was not consistent. The very minister whose whole energies were roused into action the moment that a single twig of the political tree was set in motion, now looked on with indifference while the whole stem was shaken! How could he any longer hope to find a faithful ally?—he, who was so deeply interested in such connections, if he saw his most recent and almost his only ally despoiled of his most valuable territories, without tendering him the least assistance. It might certainly be a matter of indifference to England who continued to sit on the Polish throne, but after all that she had hitherto done, was it possible that the fate of Italy and the aggrandizement of France could be so likewise? We are far from meaning to assert that England ought to have taken up arms in every such emergency. The presumption of being able to decide such points has already cost the world enough! But still I repeat that this conduct in comparison with his former policy was not consistent. History never presumes to determine what would have happened in any given case, but the supposition is at all events not without foundation, that if Austria had been at that time vigorously

supported, Europe might have been spared the whole war of succession.

Meanwhile the times were approaching in which all the anxiety of the minister to maintain peace was unavailing, since the nation was unable any longer to endure the blessings of tranquillity. England was plunged into two wars at the same time, the Spanish and the Austrian wars of succession, both of which became at last blended into one. But they constituted an epoch in the British continental policy; and it is in this point of view that they must here be considered.

The war which broke out with Spain in the year 1739, can only be regarded as a remote consequence of the continental relations; so far namely as the commercial concessions made at the peace of Utrecht, by means of the treaty of Assiento, laid the ground for it. But considered in another point of view, it is nevertheless always of extreme importance, as a phenomenon arising out of the developement of the British commercial policy, so far as this had always a considerable influence on her foreign relations. It was the first war which England carried on under the house of Hanover, or indeed it would not be too much to assert that it was the first which she carried on at all, barely for the sake of commerce; and then it must be allowed the voice of the nation imperatively demanded it. And although the treaty of Assiento and some other disputes as about cutting log-wood and and others gave occasion to it, yet the cause

properly speaking lay more deep. The spread of British power in the West Indies, and the flourishing commerce of her colonial possessions there, could not possibly consist with the claims which Spain still made to the dominion of these seas; and the war was from the very first not merely a war for the protection of the smuggling trade, but for the free navigation of the West Indian seas. The point in dispute could not be, and of course was not, whether England should carry on its smuggling trade with the Spanish colonies, but the question was from the first, whether British ships trading to the West Indies should in the high seas be subjected to Spanish search? The Spaniards had hitherto exercised this right as consequent on their dominion of the sea, and regarded it as the only means of restraining the smuggling trade. The English on the other hand refused to submit to that search. Viewed in this light the importance of this war with respect to its consequences, will not require any further notice.

Meanwhile the exertions of the minister were wholly and sincerely directed to the means of averting the war, if it could only be effected without trenching too closely on the interests of the nation. He accordingly entered into negotiations; and as he well knew that the demand relative to the right of search would never be explicitly and unreservedly given up by Spain, he sought as much as possible to evade it; and eventually succeeded on Jan. 15, 1739,

in bringing about a treaty with Spain, which was signed at Madrid. It contained, however, only a few preliminaries, while the further arrangements respecting the future security of British navigation in the West Indies was referred to commissioners appointed on both sides for the investigation. However much sagacity the minister had shown in these negotiations, his whole project nevertheless now miscarried. The opposite party prevailed, and he saw himself compelled to declare war against Spain. Would it not have been better to have let this be done by another, and to have tendered his resignation at once rather than to have submitted after a fruitless struggle to be driven from power by his opponents?

The scene of this war was as might be expected in the West Indies. It was the first time that a British fleet had sailed to those regions of the world; where only single ships, or at most small squadrons, had formerly been seen. The growing importance of the colonies in connection with their commercial jealousy, led subsequently to the result that even their colonies became the scene of war between the European powers.

But this war did not long remain the only one. The year 1740, in which Maria Theresa and Frederic II. mounted the throne, constituted an era in the general history of Europe; and likewise in the history of the British continental relations. We have seen the fluctuations which

took place in the latter during the last fifteen years; we have seen that, although at certain periods greater stability of purpose might have been expected from the British ministry, yet the main cause lay in the fluctuating politics of the continental powers themselves, and in their mutual relations. But the Austrian war of succession, which broke out at the instigation of France, and had no less considerable an object than the dismemberment of the Austrian monarchy, excited a general interest among the powers which leagued themselves with France for this purpose, viz. Spain, Sardinia, and Bavaria, and though only for a short time and for definite objects, Prussia also. The old enmity which subsisted between Austria and France, revived therefore in all its vigour; and had the object which the league had in view been attained, France would have reigned without a rival over the whole continent of Europe.

That the dismemberment of the Austrian monarchy would be in two respects detrimental to England, as neither the destiny of the Austrian Netherlands nor the balance of power on the continent could be matters of indifference to her, was generally agreed upon in England. Besides, England had not only guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction in general, but had also entered into peculiar responsibilities for sending twelve thousand auxiliaries against Austria [b].

[b] By the treaty of 1731.

The honour and interest of England seemed to render it imperative upon her to make a vigorous effort to save Austria. But how this might be effectually done, was another question.

The relations of Austria and the continental relations in general, had been materially changed since the accession of George I. to the British throne by the growing power of Prussia, which even now, in a military point of view, stood in the first rank of powers. England herself had few points of contact with Prussia; but it could not be a matter of indifference to England, that Prussia should join her enemies, and besides so long as the interest of Hanover was not considered altogether detached from that of England, a point of contact of more than ordinary importance was here presented. The alliance of Herren-haus seems also to have laid the foundation for it. But the desertion of this alliance by Prussia, and still more a personal aversion which subsisted between George II. and Frederic William I. notwithstanding their near relationship, had frustrated these views, and had even neutralized every attempt to re-establish amicable relations, yet the British cabinet did not lose sight of this measure; and even in the very next year after the death of Charles VI. it became the favourite project of Walpole to consummate a grand confederation with Austria, Russia, and Prussia, which should maintain the balance of power against the Bourbon courts. But as this was frustrated and the Austrian war

of succession broke out, hopes were nevertheless at first entertained of realising this idea in part, since a separate treaty between Austria and Prussia was effected, which was to have a defensive alliance for its sequel. But Maria Theresa, who would consent to no sacrifice rejected this proposal of reconciliation, chiefly influenced by the visionary hopes so absurdly excited in her by the negotiations in London [c]. Considered merely in a political view, Walpole's plan would have been excellent; but ministers too often forget that political plans are morally impracticable, so long as political motives are subject to the influence of the passions. How could it have been possible to effect a solid union between two powers when the principles on which it was based demanded the compulsory surrender of considerable provinces from the one to the other.

England had therefore no alternative remaining, but either to leave Austria to her fate, or to interpose for her deliverance; and, notwithstanding the unfortunate issue of the Spanish war, she chose the latter, which the voice of

[c] The most credible and satisfactory explanation which we have received of all the diplomatic relations and negotiations of the British cabinet, at that period, derived entirely from public documents, and supported by them, first appeared in the two works of W. Coxe. "Memoirs of Robert Walpole, 1798, 3 vols. and Memoirs of Horace Walpole, 4to. 1802. I refer particularly to the last, pp. 211. 224. *et seq.* What valuable materials of every kind, historical and moral, do these works present to the future historian of Great Britain, under the house of Hanover! They have been the first to render such a history of the whole period of the two Walpoles feasible.

the nation loudly demanded. Walpole, however, while he held the reins of government, would not renounce his old policy; he wished to administer succour without involving himself in the war; he furnished subsidies and took German troops into pay.

Both these phenomena, subsidies and mercenary troops, especially characterise the continental policy of England from this period. It is requisite therefore that we should examine them somewhat more minutely with regard to their nature and their effects; and indeed the more attentively we view them, the more unfair and partial will the employment of them often be considered, especially in later times.

The granting of subsidies to foreign states was not, as we have already shown above, p. 256, first introduced by the kings of the house of Hanover, but had prevailed as early as the reign of William III. and more especially in that of Anne, during the war of the Spanish succession. Upon a general view, it appears a consequence of the unequal distribution of wealth in the countries which formed the complicated political system of Europe; and for that reason necessarily extended itself more and more in proportion as this inequality increased. Since the western countries of this part of the globe, by the advantage of their position, drew to themselves the most extensive commerce, wealth became accumulated in specie, and enabled these countries to furnish the subsidies of which the others

stood in need. Not only England, but France and Holland followed this system. But England, by reason of her position and her relations, was manifestly most frequently placed in a condition to adopt it.

The granting of subsidies may prove a great gain, or a great evil, as well to the state which furnishes them as to that which receives them, accordingly as it may be directed by a sound policy, by despicable passions, or by mere political caprice: its effects, if pernicious, may even extend to the whole political system.

Independence and security are more valuable than money, and if both of them can be purchased or maintained for a state itself and its confederates by money, such an expenditure certainly cannot be without advantage. In a system composed of such different elements as the political system of Europe, that nicely-adjusted balance of power which can afford the only security for the perpetuity of the whole, cannot possibly be maintained without reciprocal support. It is clear, however, from the preceding observations, that those states which had been accustomed to receive supplies of money rather than of men, must unavoidably be subsidised as soon as they themselves experience a greater deficiency in money than in men. To rich states, therefore, who spared their own subjects, which they might otherwise have been compelled to sacrifice, the granting of subsidies became under such circumstances an almost ne-

cessary condition for the maintenance of this balance. But considered in another point of view, it is unquestionable that such a resource is likely to be scandalously abused, whenever blind passion resorts to it for satiating its animosity, or even that execrable policy is followed which sees its own interest in the protraction of war amongst others, and does not shrink from making considerable sacrifices in order to compass its object. The maxims which sound policy would dictate in granting subsidies have never, so far as I am aware, been made the subject of a distinct inquiry. They may, perhaps, be most correctly deduced from the expression itself. Subsidies are succours furnished in money by one state to another, principally for the purpose of defending the interests of that state, which are indirectly identified with its own. This appears to be the main point for consideration, but which immediately becomes changed when the defence of our own interests becomes the direct motive of our actions. It is only in the first case that any reasonable prospect of advantage can be expected; and a detailed history of subsidies would probably lead to the conclusion that great statesmen have pretty closely adhered to that fundamental maxim; and that those who violate it do so to their own cost. In an isolated case it might certainly be sometimes difficult to determine whose interests predominated; whether those of the state that furnished the subsidies, or those of the state that

received them. This, however, could never be less doubtful than in the case of the subsidies afforded by England at this period to Austria. Even the enemies of England did not venture to cast any imputation upon her for her conduct.

The taking foreign troops into pay in order to prosecute our own wars, is an expedient closely allied to that of subsidies. This phenomenon, as we learn from history, is an immediate consequence of the nature of great maritime and commercial states; where there is neither a large population, which can be employed in land-service without considerable injury to commerce, nor indeed is land-service usually considered so honourable as in those which are peculiarly territorial states[d]. But England had besides an especial reason for having recourse to this expedient, which, in her case, could not possibly have been avoided; viz. the objection of the nation to any increase of its standing army, from a fear that it would prove dangerous to its liberties. We need only retrace the parliamentary history of the past century, commencing with the last quarter of it, in order to know how often, whenever an opportunity occurred, this object became the bone of contention between the opposition and the ministerial party. Although this distrust was not altogether

[d] I have already shown this at large in the instance of an ancient people, the Carthaginians, Historical Researches, African Nations, vol. i. p. 258.

groundless, yet there can be no question that it was carried too far, and that it might have led to very detrimental consequences. While the other states of Europe continued to augment their standing forces almost every year, even an insular state could not entirely avoid doing so, where it was not merely an active member of the general state system of Europe, but was likewise threatened, and not idly so, with an invasion from without. From such exigencies and obstacles, the system of nations supporting themselves as much as possible by taking foreign troops into pay, naturally had its rise. Even this might have its good and evil consequences, according as it was proceeded in with moderation, or abused and carried to excess. England might by that means spare her men; but on the other hand it might prove a very pernicious expedient, if it weakened the confidence which she ought to repose in her own strength, and damped the military spirit of the nation. The evil appeared to attach for the most part to those nations who furnished troops for money. But in the first place, and this is a very important circumstance, according to the recognised principles of international law in those times, the people who furnished mercenary troops were not on that account regarded as enemies of those against whom these troops were employed; and if we do not take narrow and confined views of the subject, it is not difficult to show how one side of the question alone was

considered by those persons whose declamations were solely directed against a market of the human species, where slaves are exposed for sale. God forbid that these expressions should be supposed to recommend the hiring out one's own troops for foreign pay as an universally excellent maxim of policy. But if countries which groan under the burden of a heavy national debt, are not only relieved from it by this expedient, but are restored to a state of public prosperity, and who can be ignorant that such is the case? may it not be truly asserted that the troops which enter into a foreign service promote the good of their country in a more eminent degree than they could do on the field of battle in any cause of their own. Here too it is the relations under which the circumstance occurred, and the objects which might be, and indeed were attained thereby, which form the true criterion of approbation or censure. Besides, how often has it happened, indeed almost invariably in continental wars, that the countries, which furnish troops for pay, were themselves interested in the war. What an advantage it was in such a case, not only to devolve upon others the expenses of a war, in which they could not have avoided taking a part, but also to contribute towards keeping it at a distance from their own frontiers; for which object scarcely any sacrifice is too great for small and weak states to make.

England had already, before the breaking out of

the war, concluded some negotiations with Hesse and Denmark for auxiliary troops. But as an active participation in the continental war was decided upon when Carteret succeeded Walpole in office, and as Denmark also renewed her treaty, an Hanoverian corps of 16,000 men was taken into British pay. How much it contributed to the successful issue of the war, particularly at the battle of Dettingen, is well known. Yet never have the measures of government during the whole period of the House of Hanover excited a more violent opposition than at that time, when the quiet spectator would certainly least have expected it. Never were the old objections more vehemently and unbecomingly re-echoed than at that juncture.

We shall be disappointed if we expect to find in any British historian, so far as I am aware, a dispassionate and impartial examination of this opposition. The positions from which they set out render this impossible. They have the interests of England alone in view, and perhaps not merely is a disregard of them, of which they themselves cannot quote any well-grounded proof, an offence in their eyes, but even the attempt to identify the interests of England and Hanover.

But, naturally asks the impartial inquirer, had your kings then ceased to be electors of Hanover? Is it to be supposed that England had demanded this from them? Had they in that capacity no duties towards their German sub-

jects, for which they were responsible? Did they owe them no protection, so far as negotiation and continental connections could afford it? It is scarcely credible how far and in what tone such claims have been urged in England. A person must have read the parliamentary speeches of those times, particularly in the upper house [e], in order to form a conception of the furious diatribes, full of ebullitions of the coarsest national pride, and of the grossest insults, against a people which stand connected with them by so many ties. Time itself has given perhaps too complete a refutation to those fictions of projects formed for the extension of the electorate, which, whenever the slightest step was taken, or only presumed to be taken, for the advantage of Hanover, were again revived.

But in order to estimate duly those objections, it is necessary to trace them to their genuine sources. They originated much less in conviction than in party spirit. It was the cry of the opposition which succeeded at that time, after having put down Walpole, in gaining over to itself the great mass of the nation. Where could they more readily find materials for their speeches than here, where they never

[e] In the years 1742 and 1743, during the ministry of Carteret, the discharge of the Hanoverian corps in the British service is the constant topic of the rival speakers. This corps constituted at that time almost the half of the allied army, and the consequences of their dismissal may easily be calculated. I question whether the whole range of history has produced a similar example of the mastery of passion over sound reason amongst people who called themselves statesmen.

failed, as soon as they set out on mere selfish principles? It is not the design of this dissertation to give an account of that opposition in detail. Otherwise readers who are not conversant with the history of those times, would behold with amazement the degree of blindness and fatuity to which the rage of faction can lead.

The history of England during the 18th century is as rich as any other, and perhaps richer, in instances of great virtues and great achievements; but there is one aspect in which a man of right feeling cannot contemplate it for the most part without abhorrence. It is not the opposition itself, without which no political liberty can exist; neither is it the ebullition of party-spirit, which at certain periods is inseparable from it, with which I find fault. Even that disgust which arises from the reiterated and incessant clamour frequently raised on the most trivial occasions about the impending ruin of the state, which never ensued, may be overcome. But it is that melancholy and so often recurring spectacle, of men, themselves of the highest talents and character, who, calling their selfishness patriotism, speak in despite of their better conviction; who censure every measure of the minister, because it is his measure; whilst in every instance their object is not to promote the interests of the state, but to force themselves into power. The conduct of the first William Pitt, whom England still regards, with justice, as the first of her statesmen, while he was in

opposition against Walpole, a circumstance on which he himself afterwards always looked back with self-reproach, may be mentioned as an example. The true character of the opposition is said to be a continual censure of the minister. But a censure which only finds fault, and is always finding fault, loses its power, and does not attain its object. This perverse spirit of the opposition is mainly instrumental in giving to the government such excessive and increasing power. The opposition had often prevailed in England, and forced the minister from his ground, when the evil was already past; but was seldom or never able to prevent the execution of perverse measures at the right time.

The history of the Austrian war of succession interests us here only on account of the consequences resulting from it to the British continental policy. As soon as the old enmity between France and Austria revived, not only was the ancient connection between this power and England renewed, but similar connections were likewise formed on the continent, as in the reign of William and Anne. The king of Sardinia was by the treaty of Worms the ally of England in Italy, on condition of receiving subsidies; the Republic of the United Netherlands was likewise drawn into the war, and since the peace of Dresden, in 1745, England herself also entered into a friendly connection with Frederic II.

The course of the inquiry demands from us

something more than a passing notice of the conduct pursued by that great prince in this eventful period. Properly speaking it was he, who in this war constructed a new political system, since the conquest of Silesia laid the foundation of that rivalry, which subsisted between Austria and Prussia, and which became, subsequently, for more than ten years, the hinge, as it were, on which the politics of Europe turned. The later history of Frederic may perhaps afford more valuable lessons in the arts of war and of government; but in politics, provided that his claims to Silesia, which we cannot here undertake to estimate, shall be considered justifiable, this earlier period will be found most replete with instruction. His conduct, if we consider, how in 1740 he at first single-handed took up arms, how he allied himself with France, and yet so early as 1742 concluded a treaty for himself alone; how two years later he again took up arms; again allied himself with France, and yet after only sixteen months again abandoned her, affords a novel, one may say a startling, exhibition. But we must take a complete survey of the order of his external relations at that time, and above all of those with France, whose design of effecting the annihilation of the Austrian monarchy by no means coincided with his own, in order to understand and admire him. The art, till then unknown in Europe, of concluding alliances without committing one's self, of remaining unfettered while apparently bound,

of seceding when the proper moment is arrived, can be learnt from him and only from him. Indeed this seems to have become lost to posterity; yet it could scarcely be otherwise; for his whole policy was in the first place not a consequence of the superiority of his genius, but of the independence of his character, which certainly could not be transmitted by hereditary succession. Hence that intrepidity of conduct; that freedom which characterised every movement; that straightforwardness which was not on that account unaccompanied by cunning; in a word, that superiority over his contemporaries, which displayed itself not less in the cabinet than in the field of action. Hence no trace of that base womanish policy which cringes before a more puissant adversary, in order occasionally to defy a weaker, which has no higher object than to thread its path through the relative circumstances of the day, and which would be ready on the morrow to solemnise a thanksgiving, if it has but escaped to-day unscathed by them. The immutable truth, that independence of character is of more value in negotiation than brilliant talents, and rises in importance proportionately to the eminence of the station in which the possessor is placed, no one has more strikingly attested by his own example than Frederic at that period.

He understood precisely the nature of his own wishes, and retired from the theatre of war as soon as, (by the treaty of Dresden, Dec. 25,

1745,) his objects were attained. The war was continued three years longer by the other leading powers, with what view it is difficult to say, unless we take into account the passions which were excited by events which occurred in the interval. France had as little reason to flatter herself with the prospect of annihilating the Austrian monarchy, as of snatching away the imperial crown from Francis I. after he had once been elected, and recognised also by Frederic. And however brilliant her victories in the Netherlands were, experience nevertheless showed that she could not calculate upon achieving any permanent conquests here. All parties eventually concurred in a peace[f], because all were exhausted. What were the results of this to England? It is notorious that England gained no increase of territory by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. But it would be great perverseness to seek materials for blame in this fact. The war was not commenced with a view to conquest, but to support Austria against France. This object was attained; and any peace may well be termed a good peace, by which the object which has induced a person to undertake a war is attained. It is true that this is not the general opinion, which estimates the advantages solely by the conquests achieved. The more rare the virtue of political independence is, the more frequently do we experience that schemes of ambitious pro-

[f] At Aix-la-Chapelle, April 30, 1748.

jects are first excited during wars; and these, by their prolongation, then become the scourge of nations. This war, however, had attached to it other consequences of greater moment to the policy of England.

The first of these was the more intricate complication of the Colonial-Interest with the political relations of Europe. No war which England ever carried on, had so extensively affected the colonies as this. The war with Spain naturally made the West Indies and the American sea the scene of her enterprises; but the East Indies likewise became now for the first time the theatre of action for the British and French. Two of the most extraordinary men, *Labourdonnais* and *Dupleix*, had already prepared the way for acquiring a dominion there, which, if it had depended upon herself alone, would probably have secured to France the possession of India. The jealousy of the British was aroused; hostilities broke out there likewise; and although the conquests which had been made were resigned on both sides at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the spark of discord remained nevertheless unextinguished, and in each of the subsequent wars, India, as well as the new world, became the cause as well as the scene of contest.

In close connection with this, was the superiority of the navy of England, which afterwards became so firmly established. In no previous war had this ever risen to any pre-eminence above that of her enemies; but at the time

this war broke out the French navy had been reduced to the lowest state of decay, by the parsimony and supineness of Fleury, and during the war was almost annihilated. This superiority having been once established, gave rise in every new war to similar plans, which ultimately led to that exclusive dominion of the sea, which became an object of envy to other powers, and the source of so many calamities to Europe.

In the next place, the relations of England with the continental states seemed now for a considerable time to be determinately settled. Her newly-revived rivalry with France had given rise to the connection with Austria; and the duration of the latter seemed likely to be commensurate with the former. The sources of dispute with Spain were not only stopped[g], but the personally favourable inclination of Ferdinand VI. the successor of Philip V. since 1743, gave England power, if not as an ally, at least as a friend, in Spain. On a similar footing were the relations with Prussia placed. With the Republic of the Netherlands, however, they had not merely continued the same, but had become more close. If the reciprocal connection of both powers was before founded on their rivalry with France, the revolution in the constitution (which took place during this war) gave rise to new ties. It is well known that in the year 1747 on the advance of the French

[g] By the treaty at Buenretiro, October 5, 1750.

army into the Austrian Netherlands, the hereditary dignity of Stadtholder in the United Provinces, was revived in favour of William IV., the son-in-law of George II.; and the powerful influence, or rather the sovereignty, of the house of Orange was again firmly established. After a war which had been carried on and terminated in common, the continuance of the existing connection was in itself quite natural, but that which was now derived from family connections added a new link. Lastly, this war had besides strengthened the connection with Russia. Maria Theresa had succeeded in winning over Russia to her side; and Germany was for the first time visited by a Russian army in the year 1748, in consequence of a subsidy-treaty which had been concluded with England and Holland. Nevertheless this first interference of Russia in the affairs of Western Europe, was of short duration; the age had not yet arrived when the maintenance of the balance of power was in her hands.

In the years immediately subsequent to the war, especially after definitive arrangements had been entered into with Spain, England was more engrossed with domestic and financial affairs than with the transactions of foreign countries; and by the reduction of the interest of the national debt, to three per cent, Pelham[h] erected

[h] Pelham and his brother the duke of Newcastle, next or subordinate to him, stood at the head of the administration when Carteret went out of office 1744, till the death of Pelham 1754.

a more glorious monument to his ministry than any victories in the field could have raised. Meanwhile, the consequences of the system established by Frederic II. by which the maintenance of the balance in the German empire between Austria and Prussia was regarded as the foundation stone of the balance of Europe, began also to develope themselves. It might naturally be expected that England would adhere to its ally Austria; and it seemed the more natural as the occupation of East Friesland, which had been evacuated about this time, and the disputes about the Embden East India Company soon after, had produced a great coolness between George II. and Frederic. But the mode of proceeding then adopted by the British cabinet, put arms into the hands of the opposition which they knew how to wield with great dexterity. Maria Theresa had already conceived the wish of preserving the regal diadem of Rome for her son Joseph, who was yet a minor; and England not only supported this scheme, but also dispensed her subsidies with a lavish hand among the electors, in order to accomplish it. With the elector of Bavaria, the Palatinate, Saxony, and Cologne, treaties were either actually concluded or subsidies promised them, for the purpose of gaining their votes. It is surprising to hear even Pitt himself speak in favour of the treaty with Bavaria[1], because as

[1] Life of William Pitt, i. p. 114.

he expresses it, that state would thereby be drawn away from the French interest. Whether England had any reason at all for embroiling herself so deeply in the affairs of Germany is a question which we need not here determine; the principle that it should, certainly prevailed in the British cabinet. But these subsidies, (as Horace Walpole so bitterly complains [k]), not only failed in their object, for Frederic II. knew how to frustrate all these plans, but kept open the breach with Prussia at a moment when there was the strongest reason for avoiding one. It was a striking instance of the abuse of subsidies.

But that great change which was so extensively preparing at this time in the political relations of the continent, and which soon actually ensued, quickly diverted attention from the election of a king of the Romans to more important objects, nor could it fail to effect a change in the policy of England.

The approximation and close connection which immediately ensued between France and Austria, was an occurrence which seemed to mock all the calculations of the politician. No step of the French cabinet has been more frequently and severely censured; and if we take

[k] An admirable exposition of the British continental relations at that period, particularly in respect to these points, will be found in the memoir which Horace Walpole at that time, 1751, caused to be laid before the Cabinet. *Coxe's Memoirs of Horace Walpole*, p. 386, sq. Both before and after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, he was most zealous in an alliance with Frederic II., but to no purpose. He was certainly right so far, that it was unwise to exasperate him.

into consideration her next object, the making war upon and annihilating Frederic II., none was ever more justly censured. But the German writers and journalists, who have so often repeated these strictures, ought not to forget that they, at least, have had the greatest cause to be thankful for it. Was not indeed that prosperous period of almost thirty years which occurred, even though Frederic II. had come off victorious in the struggle, and which, upon the whole, was the most prosperous and flourishing that Germany had ever enjoyed, to be attributed to the good understanding between France and Austria ?

This connection between France and Austria, not only robbed England of her first ally, but by reason of the great differences which had already arisen with France herself, respecting the boundaries of Nova Scotia, the forts in the back settlements of the North American colonies, and the possession of the neutral islands in the West Indies, rendered the probability of war a matter of almost absolute certainty ; the object of which, as a continental war, would necessarily be the abolition of the newly-established balance in Germany, by the overthrow of Prussia ; and the most important theatre of which, now that the Austrian Netherlands could no longer serve as a diversion, must necessarily be Germany. George II. would have to consider this connection in two points of view, as king of England, and as elector of Hanover. It would naturally be expected than that under this coincidence

of relations, the affairs of his German states would be first arranged; it could only be considered as a fulfilment of his duties as regent, if he first bestowed his attention upon them. But how could the interests of England and Hanover be more identical than at this time? It was the only state that could now afford to England a powerful ally on the continent, Frederic II., and what would have been her situation after the subjugation of Hanover? This truth, however, though clear as the noonday sun, was far from being generally recognised in England. The old cry about the Hanoverian interest was again set up. Alas! even the man who, as minister, afterwards maintained the position that America must be conquered in Germany, at this time arraigned the connection which George II. sought to establish on the continent by means of the subsidy treaty [1].

The first thoughts of the king were directed to Russia. In consequence of the subsidies furnished to Russia in the last war, the presence

[1] Pitt, however, did not speak in general terms. He only censured the connection which George II. at that time sought to establish between Russia and Hesse. But who would not wish himself to read the very words of such a man on such an occasion: "It is impossible, said he, to defend Hanover by subsidies. An open country cannot be protected against a neighbour who is able to fall upon it with one hundred thousand men, and to send as many more after them. If Hanover, in consequence of her connection with Great Britain, shall become the object of attack, then is it obligatory upon us when peace is restored to provide her full indemnification for all the losses she has sustained. But the idea of defending Hanover by subsidies is ridiculous and impracticable." Life of W. Pitt, i. p. 136. The exaggeration of the statement is best refuted by the event.

of Russian troops in Germany was no strange spectacle, and a treaty was concluded with Elizabeth to cover the Electorate against the invasion of the French [m]. It may well be doubted whether in the relations of Russia, as they soon developed themselves, this object would be attained, since the French-Austrian party prevailed also in Russia. But Frederic II. who understood these relations too well to admit Russian troops into Hanover, and was also too well aware of the consequences which might result from the occupation of that country by a foreign power, would not allow himself to be influenced by distrust or petty feelings of any kind. He engaged himself to protect the neutrality of Hanover; George II. abandoned Russia and united with him [n], as well as with several of the neighbouring princes of Northern Germany.

The history of the ever memorable war which now broke out belongs not to this place. The glorious days of the Frederics and Ferdinands are past, and the memory of them is all that is left to us. Followed by almost all their heroic comrades, they have long descended to the shades, in order to make room for a later generation, whose history will be more easily learnt, from its containing fewer names worth remembrance.

But to return to England. The administration of this kingdom now devolved upon a man,

[m] In the spring of 1755.

[n] By the treaty at Whitehall, Jan. 15, 1756.

William Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham[o], whom the nation has never ceased to remember, and whom we, if for no other reason, must not omit to notice, as he was the main stay of the continental relations of England.

He had entered parliament as early as 1735, and had taken office, under the Pelham administration, as paymaster of the forces, which he resigned in 1755[p]. He had long been a member of the opposition against Walpole; but his influence was now become so great, that not only could no administration hold together without him, but even the formation of one was entrusted to him, because on no other terms would he himself accept of place. Accordingly a year had not elapsed before he was called upon to form an administration (Oct. 20, 1756) as secretary of state, when the king approved his proposals for filling up the other appointments, which exalted post he retained till Oct. 5, 1761, when he resigned upon finding that his measures were not supported. The five years of his administration was the most brilliant period which Great Britain had yet seen. His panegyrists have not omitted to enumerate the many battles which were won, the ships which were captured, the conquests which were made during his administration[q]; for although he was not the immediate agent in these victories, it

[o] He was born on 17 Nov. 1708, was made Earl of Chatham 1766, and died May 11, 1778.

[p] Nov. 20.

[q] A list of them will be found in the Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 198.

was through him that they were achieved. His real merit may be comprised in two lines. *By the greatness of his individual character he called up, as by magic, the spirit of his nation.* He was a man in the fullest sense of the word. Integrity and independence formed the centre of his whole moral system, from which the rays of his genius and of his often admired eloquence emanated no less than from his sound political maxims. In proportion as he relied upon himself, the nation learned to trust to its own strength and energies. Thus England became familiar with, and accustomed to, the most daring enterprises; thus became improved the discipline of the army and navy; and thus, above all, became roused the spirit of the nation: the minister meanwhile preserving its confidence, by showing himself anxious on every occasion to appear as the champion of the rights and power of the people, in the constitutional sense of the word, rather than as one who wished to court the favour of the prince, by taking every opportunity to extend the rights and power of the crown. It was therefore an essential element in the character of Pitt, that he should in his general policy show little inclination towards the system of subsidies and mercenary troops, inasmuch as it might paralyse the self-confidence and independent energy of the nation. But he exhibited also a proof that great minds do not blindly bind themselves to any particular maxims. As soon as he could

resort to that system without prejudice to those higher interests, he adopted it; and the prudence with which he exercised it was as great as its consequences were fortunate.

Never were auxiliaries more judiciously employed, than those of the allies at this period. Never were subsidies more judiciously furnished than those which were granted by Pitt to Frederic II. It is a singularly interesting spectacle to see these two great men united together, each trusting in the first place to himself and acting for himself, without on that account overlooking the advantages which might be derived from their connection with each other.

The British continental policy during the seven years' war, as long as Pitt held the reins of government, may, according to my idea, be regarded as the most perfect model from which the British cabinet could have drawn (at any time) its fundamental maxims in this respect,—I speak not of the choice of allies; this can only in part depend upon the cabinet, as the relations between the powers of the continent are variable,—but of *its whole course and method of proceeding*. It adhered very properly to the true notion of subsidies. It afforded them to those, who under the existing relations were the most natural allies of Great Britain, and with whom it had in general a community of interest; not to every one who asked for them. They were afforded with the view that those who received them might first of all assist them-

selves; and hence it was expected that advantage would be indirectly derived to England, but not that they should forget themselves and first succour England. More was not promised than was intended to be given, but what was promised was faithfully performed. They made the weak strong, while they placed them on a secure footing, and supported them there by uniting themselves to them. Thus might Pitt and Frederic, both equally independent, each pursue his own course, without, by so doing, destroying the perfect harmony which subsisted between them. Pitt has himself in one of his later speeches so clearly defined the principles on which he acted, and the policy which he pursued at this period, that the reader would not willingly forego the satisfaction of seeing it here introduced[r].

"I have been much abused, my Lords, for supporting a war, which it has been the fashion to call my German war. But I can affirm, with a clear conscience, that that abuse has been thrown upon me by men, who were either unacquainted with facts, or had an interest in misrepresenting them. I shall speak plainly and frankly to your Lordships upon this, as I do upon every occasion. That I did in Parliament oppose, to the utmost of my power, our engaging in a German war, is most true; and if the same circumstance were to recur, I would act

[r] Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 221. The speech was first delivered in the year 1770 in the Upper House.

the same part, and oppose it again. But when I was called upon to take a share in the administration, that measure was already decided. Before I was appointed secretary of state, the first treaty with the king of Prussia was signed, and not only ratified by the crown, but approved of and confirmed by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament."

"It was a weight fastened upon my neck. By that treaty, the honour of the crown and the honour of our nation were equally engaged. How I could recede from such an engagement; how I could advise the crown to desert a great prince in the midst of those difficulties, in which a reliance upon the good faith of this country had contributed to involve him, are questions I willingly submit to your Lordships' candour. That wonderful man might, perhaps, have extricated himself from his difficulties without our assistance. He has talents, which, in every thing that touches the human capacity, do honour to the human mind. But how would England have supported that reputation of credit and good faith, by which we have been distinguished in Europe? What other foreign power would have sought our friendship? What other foreign power would have accepted of an alliance with us? But, my Lords, though I wholly condemn our entering into any engagements which tend to involve us in a continental war, I do not admit that alliances with some of the German princes are either detrimental or useless. They

may be, my Lords, not only useful, but necessary." Not, as he farther observes, to introduce foreign auxiliaries into England, which is strong enough to protect itself, but into Ireland to defend it from invasion.

The connection with Prussia and her allies was not, however, the only new feature which the seven years' war produced in respect to the British continental relations. One other was this, that the republic of the United Netherlands, notwithstanding its intimate relations with England, had the option of remaining neutral in this war, which it had not in any preceding one. But the connection between France and Austria would necessarily affect in some degree the conduct of this republic, and weaken its connection with England. In the revolutions of the continent it had only one paramount interest, the continuance of the existing condition of the Austrian Netherlands. As long as these provinces continued in the possession of a distant power, they served them as a bulwark with or without fortified places. Under the existing relations these could not become as formerly the scene of hostilities; France had by her connection with Austria discarded all designs upon them; and therefore for the republic this connection, viewed in this light, must have been a most felicitous occurrence. But the advantageous effects of this neutrality upon its commerce, which even excited the envy of England, are well known. What an era might

this have been for the republic if it had not been long afflicted with disorders which no remedial measures could now counteract.

These changes in her relations with other powers, rendered it unnecessary for England to establish any federal connections in Italy, such as it had formed with Sardinia during previous wars. It was during the negotiations for peace in 1762, that recourse was first had to this country as mediator, and that not in vain. But England had still remaining another ancient ally who was drawn with her into the vortex and required assistance—Portugal.

It has been already shown, in its proper place, when and how the connection with this state arose, and became established. Since the treaty of Utrecht it had kept up a highly advantageous connection, in a commercial point of view, for England, without any important political consequences resulting from it during the long period of peace which Portugal enjoyed. Even the plans of Pombal could not have dissolved or materially affected it. But the closer connection which through the family compact drew Spain into the war, was also instrumental in involving Portugal in it, and in causing her now to look for assistance to her ancient ally.

The celebrated family compact of the Bourbons appeared in the result to confirm the fears which had been entertained during the war of the Spanish succession, and at the peace of Utrecht. Although the crowns of France

and Spain remained separate, yet the interests of both powers were intimately united. How little, however, hitherto, had the fears, which were cherished on that account, been justified by the event; Spain would have been unavoidably obliged to take part with France in the war, but this had as yet only served to enable England to support herself at the cost of Spain, and to keep her sailors in good humour by the rich prizes which they captured. This last was perhaps the most important advantage which she gained. By privateering and plunder, individuals enriched themselves; but no nation has ever acquired by such means a single permanent advantage.

The effects of the family compact[8] then were even already apparent; England became unavoidably involved in a war with Spain, and since Portugal was now threatened with an attack from the same quarter, not only were British auxiliaries sent to Spain, but also a German commander, count William of Lippe Bückeburg, one of the heroes of the seven years' war. Although it was not in his power to recast the nation in a new mould, he nevertheless stamped the recollection of himself indelibly upon it. Who is there even now in Portugal who has not heard of the great count. The country escaped from the war uninjured; and

[8] Signed on Aug. 10, 1761, but still kept secret. The very first two articles of the treaty contained an offensive and defensive alliance, and a reciprocal guarantee for all possessions.

the connection with England had become strengthened.

But one consequence of the family compact, though accidental, yet much more momentous as regards the continental policy of England, was the secession of Pitt from the ministry. However secret the conclusion of that treaty had been kept in Spain, with the view of gaining time, in order to secure to themselves the treasures from America, Pitt had nevertheless been able to procure intelligence of their proceedings. His anxious wish was, as might have been expected from a man of his character, to anticipate Spain, and immediately to declare war upon her, which he saw to be inevitable. But he was not believed, and was in consequence outvoted. Not accustomed to capitulate when convinced he was right he turned his back and retired [t].

His prediction was fulfilled, and England soon saw herself obliged to declare war. But although even now the short war with Spain had been prosecuted with the greatest success, the retirement of Pitt had such an effect on the measures of the British cabinet, that the whole of his system of continental policy, as yet scarcely matured, necessarily fell to the ground. It ceased, however, to take an active part in the continental war, the subsidies to Frederic II. were discontinued, and England concluded

[t] October 5, 1761.

a peace for herself without paying that regard to her ally which he might with justice have demanded.

Viewed in the light of a mere temporary advantage, this conduct of the British cabinet may admit of some vindication; but on the principles of a higher policy it cannot possibly be defended. It cannot be denied that the assertion of Pitt, that Frederic II. if left entirely alone would be able to extricate himself from all embarrassment, was now verified; but if this be granted, would it not have been more consonant to the principles of sound policy, for England to have allowed her connections with Prussia to continue as long as the intimate relation between Austria and France should exist. Would England have obtained a peace on less favourable terms if she had concluded it in conjunction with Frederic? It was only owing to a fortunate combination of circumstances that no new relations occurred to render his assistance necessary for England. His aversion to this state was afterwards perhaps too deeply rooted to admit of being ever again eradicated.

England, therefore, after the seven years' war stood alone without allies, or at least without powerful ones; and had after the prostration of that power which opposed and rivalled her, no immediate cause for seeking new connections. During the profound peace which the west of Europe so long enjoyed, no such exigence arose. The activity of the nation was

confined at first to its own domestic affairs; since the well known disputes with Wilkes brought questions into agitation which seriously affected the rights of the upper house. The contest with Spain about the Falkland islands (1770) produced only threats but no hostilities; the disputes which commenced with the colonies in North America soon engrossed universal attention. The particulars of the dispute as well as the war which ensued is foreign to the present inquiry, except so far as continental relations are concerned. The effects which it had upon these were manifold. The first was the restoration of the subsidy system. From the moment it was decided to send an army over to America, the need of foreign assistance was sensibly felt. The assertion of lord Chatham "that cases may occur in which connection with German princes could not be dispensed with," is again applicable here. He certainly had not anticipated such a case as the present, and could not have alluded to the contest which broke out with America on the subject of exemption from taxation[t]. Once admitting however (which I

[t] The opinions of Chatham respecting America may be gathered from the bill which he proposed to the upper House, but without success, Feb. 1, 1775, after the disturbances had broken out. It will be found in Life of Pitt, ii. p. 129. The colonies were to remain dependent, but to have the privilege of taxing themselves by their provincial assemblies. The congress at Philadelphia, which had already assembled, was to settle the division of the taxes among the provinces, and to determine the sum which each was to contribute towards the liquidation of the National debt in England. Even Chatham could not rise sufficiently high to take an enlarged view of the immeasurable advantage, which would result to England from the complete liberation of America.

am very far from maintaining) that it was politic to attempt the subjugation of America by force, there can be little doubt that mercenary aid was the best resource which could be adopted. The lives of their own men were thereby spared—lives which a state like England could least of all afford to lose.

Further, although this war did not give rise to a continental war in Europe, yet it did to one amongst the European powers, as France took part with America, and Spain, by virtue of the Family compact, was also necessarily drawn into it. America was merely a secondary stage for these powers, the war between them was almost entirely a colonial one, for which new materials had been accumulating ever since the treaty of Paris. One of the greatest evils that disturbs the European system is that intermixture of its colonies, naturally occasioned by their geographical position. This was the principal cause of the seven years' war, and, although the peace which put an end to it, and by which France was completely dispossessed of its continental possessions in North America[u], was in some measure a remedy for this evil, it nevertheless contributed in other respects rather to aggravate it. The power of the British and the French was now nearly equally balanced in the West Indies, but in the East from the time England established herself at Bengal, (1763,) the

[u] After that it ceded Louisiana also to Spain, 1765.

preponderance was clearly in her favour. France nevertheless still retained hopes of being able to restore the balance, as she had found an ally in one of the chiefs of the interior, who, from personal interest, was necessarily hostile to England, and had already discovered the means of setting her at defiance. The East Indies thus became the principal theatre of the war, and in spite of every effort they would have been lost to England, if a better arrangement in the organisation of the East India Company, by the concentration of the four presidencies under one governor general, and the bill of Pitt, had not rendered them politically independent of the government.

The colonial war, moreover cost England a political friend on the continent, by the republic of the United Netherlands becoming implicated in it. England certainly lost nothing by this war; she conquered St. Eustace, Trinconomale, Negapatuam; the last of which she retained to the peace. But this rupture with the republic was connected with another event, which was necessarily of critical importance to England.

England by this war became involved in a contest with all the maritime powers of Europe, and was singly a match for them all. It was indeed a signal proof of the rapid advance she had made since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle that she was now mistress of the seas, although as yet she was far from asserting a dominion over

them. But when once her energies were directed to this object, circumstances naturally arose out of her attempt, which exposed England to the danger of being involved more extensively with the greatest part of the continent. It was not enough to cripple or even to destroy the enemies' fleets, unless she effectually prevented them from refitting and building new ones. Their capabilities of doing this however depended, for the most part, on their interference with neutral powers, from which France would be obliged to procure the necessary materials. This was one reason for her oppression of neutrals and the obstructing of their navigation; but these arbitrary proceedings necessarily became extended beyond all bounds as soon as the annihilation of the enemy's commerce and the endeavour to appropriate it to themselves (two facts inseparable from the sovereignty of the sea) became their avowed object. In wars of earlier times, the commerce of belligerent powers had escaped under the protection of neutral flags, and although the celebrated maxim, *free ship, free cargo*, had always been but doubtfully maintained, the dispute could never become of much practical importance until some one maritime power felt itself sufficiently strong to maintain the contrary. But this unjust oppression, for such the conduct of England was felt to be, was not submitted to without resistance; Catharine II. set on foot the armed Neutrality[x], which the

[x] In the year, 1781.

northern powers, and even Portugal, joined; and Holland herself would have acceded to it, if England had not anticipated her doing so by a declaration of war.

The armed neutrality was a phenomenon from which England might have derived important lessons; but she did not. Submission then was absolutely necessary, unless she was willing to incur the danger of being involved in a war with the whole of Europe; this submission however was made in silence, unaccompanied by any formal recognition of the principles which had been set up. All, therefore, that remained was an association which could only be of practical utility during the continuance of the war. The indispensable need of a maritime law of nations was more sensibly felt than ever; and Catharine had loudly proclaimed it by that association; but here as usual the policy adopted was merely to serve a temporary purpose; and of what use could a maritime law of nations on paper be when the want of it, in time of peace, should cease to be felt, and which, it was obvious, in time of war would be made subservient to the convenience of individual states?

But another effect of this war upon the continental policy of England was her altered relations with the Netherlands. Internal tranquillity was by no means restored in that country by the peace, and England even found an opportunity thereby of maintaining her influence over it.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the history

of the continental policy of England, that although she was so deeply involved in the affairs of foreign countries, yet during the whole period of the House of Hanover, (it may be said too even of the Stuarts,) in no one of them was the spirit of party either fostered or excited thereby. What a different spirit had France excited in Sweden, and Russia in Poland! This consequence may indisputably be ascribed to the fact that England required no party aid for the attainment of her object, but merely the support of the administration; and in some measure to the existing relations of that period, which gave little encouragement to party spirit in the countries with which England stood connected. I have no wish, therefore, to pass any encomium on the more exalted morality of the British minister on that ground; but I am prepared to prove that the interference of England in the affairs of foreign powers, was hitherto much less dangerous to their object than the influence of the continental powers upon one another.

The events which occurred in the United Netherlands formed at the time we speak of an exception. As during the last war this state had leagued itself with France, and as that power found an opportunity to do her some essential services during her quarrel with Joseph II., it could not be difficult for the French ministry to maintain for itself a party here; and this party, under the name of the patriotic party,

stepped forward as an antagonist of the House of Orange, without knowing, as far as could be discerned, any thing more determinate as to its real object.

The moment at which England might probably have attached to herself the Republic, with less galling, but certainly more lasting bonds, as afterwards happened, would have been the moment of the peace. But this moment was neglected! When could generosity towards an old friend with whom she had only occasionally fallen out, have been more properly evinced than here? Yet so far was she from acting in this spirit, that she forcibly dispossessed Holland of one of her colonies, *Negapatuam*[y]; a colony of no inconsiderable importance; and was only with difficulty prevented from depriving her of another, *Trinconomale.* By this impolitic harshness the Republic was driven to conclude a peace through the mediation of France; and it was made abundantly evident that as colonial aggrandizement became the point at issue, no compunction would be shown by England in despoiling, even with her own hands, her ancient ally; and that she only waited for an opportunity to extend further her rapacity. Thus then she deprived herself for ever of the confidence of a nation with which she had so long been in close and amicable con-

[y] In the treaty of peace of May 20, 1784.

nection, in a manner which made its renewal impossible;—what was the equivalent?

The ferment at home, however, certainly made it necessary for the Orange party to attach itself to England, since, during the life of Frederic II., it found no other support. But even this support was of little help to it. The British cabinet did not find it advisable to afford any efficient assistance, when the prerogatives of the hereditary Stadtholder were one after another infringed and contracted; and it became highly probable that he would have been entirely dispossessed of his dignity, if Prussia had not adopted a change in her policy.

It is well known under what circumstances, and with what result, in the autumn of the year 1787, the commotions in Holland were suppressed by the entrance of a Prussian corps, and the Stadtholder reinstated and confirmed in the full exercise of his power.

England up to the present time had remained without any considerable ally on the continent. But the change which we have just mentioned gave rise to another alliance, which was not without important consequences to Europe. England and Prussia both united themselves with Holland; they had the same common object in view, that of supporting her newly given or restored constitution, and this common point of contact soon brought on an alliance between these two powers [z].

[z] By the treaty of the 13th of August, 1788.

The connection of Prussia with Holland was a consequence of family interest, the further consideration of which would be irrelevant to this inquiry. With regard to England the affinity with her was not sufficiently close to allow us to attribute to this source the interest which she took in the affairs of this country. Although the reigning houses were connected, the motive by which she was more immediately actuated in the part she took, was the desire of counteracting French influence by the depression of the patriotic party. But surely the moment at which the peace was concluded would have been more favourable for this purpose than the present. England certainly could not view the fate of the Republic with indifference. She necessarily wished to see her independence maintained; but the compulsory re-establishment of a form of government, to which a great, perhaps the greater, part of the nation were vehemently opposed, could not possibly be considered as a firm foundation of her independence. She united herself in this way with the government which she restored, but not with the nation. Experience has shown the dangerous consequences of such policy.

By this triple alliance, however, the connection of England with Prussia was renewed, though the basis on which it rested was not formed on so extended a community of interest as under Frederic II. The maintenance of the Stadtholdership in the Netherlands could not

possibly become of sufficient importance to both these powers, to form a permanent bond of union between them. Chatham, with his principles, would never have concluded the alliance which his son concluded; still less would he have approved the consequences which followed it.

These consequences displayed themselves chiefly in the east of Europe. The representation which we have already given has shown the little share England had taken in the events of those parts since the peace of Nystadt. Her commerce was carried on there without molestation; the growing prosperity of Russia had favoured it, without becoming formidable to England. In the mean time the most decisive changes had taken place in these quarters, such as the foundation of the independence of the Crimea [a], the appearance of Russian fleets in the Mediterranean [b], and even the first partition of Poland [c], without any active manifestation of opposition on the part of England. The British cabinet felt itself too little interested in them; it had no political connection either with Poland or with Turkey, and had no engagements to perform to either; the trade with the Baltic, and that with the Levant, by no means considerable, was not affected; and those countries in general lay beyond the circuit of its political sphere of action. Whether therefore her policy in this re-

[a] In the year 1771. [b] In the year 1770. [c] In the year 1772.

spect was exceptionable or not may admit of doubt, although an action which set at nought the hitherto recognised law of nations could not be a matter of indifference even to England. Her policy can only be excused on the ground that she connived at what she could not hinder. But after the triple alliance her former maxims of policy were evidently changed, and England sought not only to obtain an influence over the affairs of those countries, but even assumed a tone of dictation. If we may credit French authors [d], she was actuated by a jealousy of the treaty of commerce, which Russia had concluded with France, 1787, by which France had been greatly favoured; in consequence of this England herself felt an inclination to do every thing to involve Russia in a war with Turkey, which it is well known broke out 1788. The truth of this unauthenticated assertion may reasonably admit of doubt; but that the British policy here stepped beyond its proper sphere, that England had thought herself able to dictate where dictation was not to be dreamt of—of this the ministry were soon to experience a painful conviction.

The mediation of England at the congress of Reichenbach, 1788, was not without advantage; but when the British cabinet wished likewise to dictate to Catharine II. the conditions of peace with Turkey, she declared that she concluded peaces only for herself; nor was she alarmed at the demonstration made by the equipment

[d] Compare Segur, Histoire de Frédéric Guillaume, vol. ii.

of a fleet; she actually concluded the peace at Jassy[e] for herself, and on the terms she wished, and the British cabinet gained no more from its threats than the knowledge that it had threatened to no purpose.

The first object to which the exertions of every cabinet should be directed would seem to be, to comprehend clearly, and to determine precisely, the proper course of action which its position and strength point out to it; and thence to deduce the fundamental maxims of its foreign policy. This assertion will not be supposed to imply that such a theory should be openly paraded, as it were, and be laid down in public declarations; but the fact that every state, however powerful, has certain definite limits to which its sphere of action should be confined, is an immutable truth; and he who would deny the conclusions drawn from it, would be guilty of an absurdity. Yet if we look into history, how seldom do we find this truth kept in view? How many unsuccessful plans and undertakings do we discover, which it were easy to see beforehand could not succeed? Indeed it would seem to require nothing more than sound common sense, and a moderate degree of intelligence, to determine the sphere of action to which a nation should confine itself. But still we must not forget to take in account the great influence

[e] The 29th of December, 1790, the empress retained in it the district on the Neister; instead of the old boundary which England had wished to prescribe.

of the passions upon politics, and, above all, the exaggerated conception, which every minister is prone to form, of the importance of the state at the head of which he is placed, in order to explain the many disastrous errors from which scarcely any state has kept itself wholly exempt. Even England did not exhibit at this period the only example of this kind. Justice, however, assuredly demands of us to remark, that it is much more difficult for a maritime and commercial state to determine the boundaries of its interests and its sphere of action, than it is for a continental one. Not only the direct, but, still more, the indirect points of contact are here so numerous, the calculation of how much damage may be inflicted on other powers by its fleets, is made on no determinate data, and is on that account in the highest degree indeterminate. The indirect damage is greater than the direct; and the state is so much misled by an exalted opinion of its own power, as to think itself still greater, and its own influence more decisive than it really is, and from its nature can be.

We have thus far traced the continental policy of England up to the period at which, by the great revolutions of Europe, not only the triple alliance last concluded was dissevered, but all political relations were at once violently rent asunder, and then forcibly joined together again by new ties, which, after such sanguinary conflicts, could not keep together the contracting parties for any length of time.

How, under such circumstances, could the former relations of England be maintained? It was not, however, merely a change in individual instances which they underwent, but the whole system of her continental policy assumed a different form. On this account then it is necessary to pause here awhile in order to review some general results, for which the previous investigations will afford materials.

Our statements have shown that England was certainly involved in the affairs of the continent, sometimes more and sometimes less, without ever being entirely disengaged from them. But if we make some allowance for the period of the Quadruple Alliance under George I., England was very far from having ever been, or having ever claimed to be, the dominant power in the political system of Europe. The internal relations of this system were not in general determined by England, but England rather determined her own conduct by them. This was precisely the reason why the continental policy of England so seldom proceeded on solid principles. How far, however, this should be made a matter of reproach to the British cabinet, requires a close investigation. To settle permanently the reciprocal relations of the continental powers was throughout beyond the capacity of England. It would have been a foolish and vain presumption to attempt it. For this very reason then she could discover no durable and solid basis for her federative system, in respect to

the choice of her allies. England was not like France and Prussia, and other countries, surrounded by weaker states, which she might attach to herself by means of her preponderating influence; she was obliged to seek out allies for herself; and could not even make the ties which bound her to the most powerful of all, to Austria, indissoluble. England, from her position, can only have allies, which are separated from her by the sea. If they are among the weaker states, such as Holland, Portugal, and Sardinia, they are from their very nature more likely to be under the influence of their immediate neighbours than hers; if they are among the more powerful, as Austria and Prussia, the connection will only subsist so long as it afford some point of common interest. England therefore has not the power to construct a federative system as the powers of the continent have.

But though we cannot with justice cast any imputation on England for the change which she made in the choice of her allies, (if she erred in that, she committed political errors, for which she would have to atone,)—the non-performance of engagements for which she had made herself responsible certainly exposes her to merited censure. In the three great continental wars in which England took part, the Spanish, the Austrian war of succession, and the seven years' war, she concluded every time a peace for herself, or only in connection with Holland, and deserted her principal confederates. This con-

duct did not originate in any refined policy, systematically taken up, nor in a dereliction of public faith and confidence; but in the change of political principles, which, according to the general spirit of the British constitution, is almost inseparably connected with a change of ministry. In none of these cases did the minister who begun the war bring it to a close; his successor generally belonged to the opposite party, and therefore brought with him the opposite principles. The influence and power of the premier in England does not trench at all upon the personal character of the regent, as it does in unlimited monarchies; but emanates immediately from the spirit of the constitution, from the relation between the king and his parliament, between whom the minister is the connecting link. Without him therefore nothing of importance can be done. Hence arises, what is certainly a most pernicious consequence in respect to foreign powers, that the British government cannot guarantee with the same assurance as others, the performance of its obligation. The periods of Marlborough and Chatham exhibit a proof of this. But then, again, on the part of continental powers, physical impossibilities may occur, from extreme distress or total subjugation, to prevent the fulfilment of their engagements, a case which can scarcely be supposed to occur with respect to England.

Notwithstanding this one real defect, which attaches to the policy of England, her continental influence seems upon the whole, through-

out this period, to have been highly beneficial in a twofold point of view. In the first place, Europe was indebted to it, during a considerable period, for the maintenance of peace. That this was the object of the British policy under George I., and continued to be so, as long as circumstances permitted, under George II., has been already shown. It was therefore anything but a hostile influence. In the second place, in the great wars in which England took part, she uniformly supported the weaker against the more powerful. She connected herself with Austria in the early wars, and in the later with Prussia, as these monarchies, one after the other, seemed threatened to be destroyed by confederated Europe. Both might possibly have saved themselves without the co-operation of England; but the merit of England must not, on that account, be depreciated. She materially contributed, perhaps in a greater degree than any other European power, to uphold the political balance of Europe.

SIXTH PERIOD.

PERIOD OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, 1788—1815.

We have still to consider the last period of the British continental policy, which, though not the most extensive, is unquestionably the most interesting, both as respects England herself,

and the continent of Europe. In respect to England herself, because it is distinguished by the most remarkable development of her energies; in respect to the continent, because England became in it the centre and the only unshaken support of the still existing political system of Europe; and because she determined and influenced the politics of other cabinets much more decisively than she had ever done in any former period. Never has the truth of the observation with which we commenced this inquiry, "that it is a highly advantageous circumstance for the maintenance of the liberty and independence of a states-system, that one of its principal members should be an insular state and in possession of a naval force," been more strikingly demonstrated than in this period. If a bridge had been thrown across the Channel how totally different might have been the fate of England and of Europe! We certainly do not entertain the slightest doubt that England, even in this case, would have remained unconquered, or that the invasion of a French army would eventually have ended in its destruction; and simply because the warlike energies of the nation would in that case have been more generally roused and concentrated, and more resolutely displayed. But the destiny of the British state, at least, if not of the British people, is now so entirely identified with the security of the capital, that the consequences of its capture, or even of its being exposed to any imminent danger of cap-

ture, are incalculable; and who will venture to assert, that in such a case its security would have remained unendangered, or that even a conquest, though perhaps only momentary, could have been averted, especially as to this point all the powers of the foe would have been undoubtedly directed.

The relations of England with the continent at the period of which we speak, were determined by a man, who, in the double capacity of first Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, directed the helm of the state as premier, and who enjoyed the full confidence of his sovereign—*William Pitt*[q]. When scarcely arrived at manhood—when only twenty-four years of age—he was raised to this exalted post, and had already held it six years when the French revolution broke out, which soon placed even England in a position that would not allow her

[q] William Pitt, the younger son of the earl of Chatham, was born on the 28th of May, 1759. He was indebted for his early education to his father and the subsequently appointed bishop of Winchester; and for his further tuition, especially in classical literature, philosophy, and eloquence, to Eton school, and Cambridge. He entered the lower house as early as his 22nd year, on the 23rd of Jan. 1781, as member for Appleby; and delivered his first speech on the 26th of February, on the better regulations of the civil list, by which he immediately excited general attention. He entered the ministry for the first time as early as July, 1782, under the earl of Shelburne, as Chancellor of the Exchequer; but upon his retirement from office, March 14, 1783, he also resigned; until after the dismissal of lord North and Fox, Dec. 23, 1783, he was placed at the head of the administration, as first Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, which distinguished post he retained till his voluntary resignation on the 9th of February, 1801; and resumed the second time from the 25th of May, 1804, until his death, 23rd of January, 1806.

to be a mere spectator. At this early period of his life this extraordinary man displayed not only wonderful talents and intelligence, but what was of much greater consequence, a maturity of understanding and judgment which seemed far beyond his years; and these qualifications were combined with an energy of character equally remarkable. Several of his contemporaries, his opponents and rivals, might possess more brilliant talents, but none could vie with him in clearness of intellect, in decision of purpose, and devotion to his country. He was a perfect statesman, in the noblest sense of the word; and what Plutarch says of Pericles, that he was only to be seen when going to the Senate House or returning from it, may with the strictest justice be applied to him. His policy it will be the object of the following inquiry to set forth. According to our professed design we are certainly principally concerned with his foreign policy; but this nevertheless stands so closely—so almost inseparably connected with his domestic administration, that we must be permitted at least to cast an occasional glance at that. Here, however, alas! we have too much occasion to regret the scantiness of our materials[r]. Of his public parliamentary

[r] Would it be believed that in a country, so rich in biography, the first of its statesmen has not yet met with a biographer in any degree worthy of him? According to the public organs of intelligence we may expect to have this desideratum supplied by his tutor and friend the aged bishop of Winchester; by which also it is hoped a clearer light will be diffused over the simplicity of his private life. The genuine portrait of this great man, in which the clearness, composure, and energy of this master

career our information is sufficiently ample, but for all that relates to the whole internal mechanism of his financial administration, for all that relates to the manner in which Pitt conducted this, and especially for all that relates to the extraordinary simplification of the business of the treasury, his eminent services in which respect have acquired for him such imperishable fame, where can we find any accurate information? The account of his foreign policy, however, must be prefaced by one general observation. His conduct throughout was uniformly in accordance with his own conviction, and this is expressed in every one of his speeches in a manner not to be mistaken. According to this conviction *the summum bonum for England was the maintenance of her constitution.* This is therefore the hinge on which his whole domestic policy during that most eventful period revolves. But, in the maintenance of this constitution, which involved the condition of his whole sphere of action, he had in view merely the means for carrying on his foreign policy; and thus both stand in the closest reciprocal connection.

When, in the year 1789, the opening of the assembly of the States-General ushered in the revolution, the attention of the minister was more engrossed with domestic than with foreign

spirit are so majestically expressed, is rarely to be met with on the continent; whilst most of our readers have perhaps seen it a hundred times in miserable caricatures. Even the collection of the speeches of the Right Hon. William Pitt, in 3 vols. London, 1808, is by no means complete; still it is one of our principal sources for what follows.

affairs. The relations of England with the continent were decisively influenced by the affairs of Holland, which, as we have shown above, by the restoration of the stadtholdership, occasioned a close connection not only with the House of Orange, but also with Prussia, who had effected this object by open force. The interference of England in the affairs of the north, which was a consequence of this, though a fruitless one, and the rupture with Russia which thereupon ensued, have been noticed above. In his domestic administration, after completing the new arrangements for the management of the affairs of the East India Company, in accordance with the bill passed in reference to them, the minister was chiefly occupied with his financial measures for the diminution of the national debt, and for the reduction of the interest of the 4 per cent. annuities to 3 per cent. Convinced that the regular payment of the interest upon the national debt was not sufficient for the maintenance of the national credit; but that it was necessary to think of paying off the principal, he had, three years before, by the institution of a sinking fund, thrown out an anchor which has since given assumed stability to its credit[s]. This great institution could scarcely begin to operate at that time; the contraction of new debts, which a new war rendered inevitable, could not therefore enter into the plan of the minister.

[s] 26th of May, 1786.

The observation of a strict neutrality was consequently the policy adopted by the minister during the first and second so called Constituent and Legislative Assemblies; for however imperfect and exceptionable, in many respects, the first constitution might be, which Louis XVI. accepted and pledged himself to, the British cabinet, nevertheless, abstained from any interference in the affairs of France. But when, indeed, during the session of the second national assembly, political principles of a totally different character were set forth, the throne subverted, the king with his family cast into prison; when moreover the National Convention, which next followed, abolished monarchy and sent the king to the scaffold, the relations of the two nations were disturbed; yet still no war ensued, though considerations arose which rendered other proceedings necessary.

The question now became one of intervention in the domestic affairs of a foreign state: a question which has always had its difficulties and was perhaps never embarrassed with greater than in the present instance. It was to be decided whether this intervention should be general, or to what extent it might be carried. It was a favourite assertion of the popular leader and popular writer of that time, that no foreign state ought to interfere in the domestic affairs of another state; and even now we hear it asserted, that such an interference is to be regarded as an attack upon its independence and self-exist-

ence. That assertion holds good, so long as it is applied to states, which, by their geographical position and political relations, stand separated. When revolutions occur in China and North America, it would be preposterous to assert that France or Austria are authorised to interfere.

The case, however, is altogether different where states are intimately related to each other by geographical or political contact, by a common union, a confederacy, or a states-system, as is the case with the states of Europe. Here the domestic concerns of the one are by no means always indifferent to the other; and cases may occur in which interference may be inevitable. If we begin by taking a survey of the constitution of the different states, we shall find that with all their individual varieties, yet in the system, taken as a whole, either the monarchical or the republican principle is predominant. The transition from the one to the other in any of the leading members of the system, must necessarily, by its unavoidable influence upon the whole, excite just apprehensions among the others. Thus an interest is awakened which may certainly still remain unaccompanied by any active intervention. How intense, however, and how lively must this interest be, and how just the apprehension, when the principles promulgated in the other states are diametrically opposed to those which were formerly received, and altogether irreconcilable with them? Does no common

interest here find a place? Would not therefore an active interference in such a case become just? Would not negotiations here be allowed? Would not the revolutionary state feel at liberty to reject these, with the contemptuous answer, that it would not allow of any foreign intervention? Then again, what, if these principles are not only in their nature opposed to others, but at the same time their propagation and practical introduction into other states shall be expressly determined upon, and loudly proclaimed? Does not the duty of self-preservation then step in? Will it not then be requisite even to take up arms in self-defence, and to combat those principles?

These cases occurred as soon as the French revolution took its proper direction. This was founded upon the sovereignty of the people; but *the sovereignty of the people stands in direct opposition to the monarchical principle.* Now only one sovereign can exist in a state, not two. Either the people are the sovereign, and then is the state a republic, or the monarch, whatever may be his title. If he ceases to be so, then he sinks directly to the level of a mere magistrate; whether he preserve the title of king or not. "It is," says Pitt, in one of those powerful speeches, from which I shall have frequent occasion to quote, (and what higher authority can be cited than that of such a statesman at the head of the freest of all monarchies?) "It is a gross perversion of the principles of all

political society, to suppose that there exists continually, in every government, a sovereignty in abeyance (as it were) on the part of the people, ready to be called forth on every occasion, or rather, on every pretence, when it may suit the purposes of the party or faction who are the advocates of this doctrine, to suppose an occasion for its exertion. It is in those false principles that are contained the seeds of all the misery, desolation, and ruin, which in the present day have spread themselves over so large a portion of the habitable globe. I have said more upon this subject, than I should have thought necessary, if I had not felt that this false and dangerous mockery of the sovereignty of the people is in truth one of the chief elements of Jacobinism, one of the favourite impostures to mislead the understanding, and to flatter and inflame the passions of the mass of mankind, who have not the opportunity of examining and exposing it, and that, as such, on every occasion and in every shape in which it appears, it ought to be combatted and resisted by every friend to common order, and to the peace and happiness of mankind[t]."

But if this principle were directly opposed to the British constitution, a constitution which is a pre-eminent example of a free monarchy, how much more was it incompatible with the constitutions of the principal states of the con-

[t] *Speeches*, iii. p. 58, etc.

tinent, which are either in the class of absolute monarchies without democratic influence, or at most belong to those in which the higher classes exercise in the state-assembly only a certain, and for the most part very limited, share in the legislation. If in the case of the British state a reform in the constitution might possibly have been sufficient, (though even this is scarcely probable,) an entire change in the constitution of those other states must unavoidably have ensued, if the French principle prevailed. How just, therefore, were the apprehensions which every where arose! Who could determine how far a doctrine would spread, which at the same time flattered the people, and was set forth by its originators as that which alone was productive of happiness? But these apprehensions received a new and formidable increase by the decree of the Convention, 19th Nov. 1792, which offered assistance from France to all people, who, for the establishment of liberty, i. e. democracy, should rebel against their constituted authorities. Such a summons to a general insurrection is unparalleled in history, and if any indulged the flattering hope that such a decree would never be executed, it was crushed by the new decree of 17th Dec. which enjoined all the generals of the new Republic to establish in those countries into which they should carry their arms, a democracy in place of the pre-existing constitutions.

Thus by this decree was the most sacred pre-

rogative which nations possess, that by virtue of which they form a state, their constitution, threatened with annihilation. In their constitution was at the same time involved their independence, because the new constitution was prescribed to them. Can any thing more be required to justify the ruling authorities, if they refused what was attempted to be forced upon them; if they defended their rights; if they even took up arms in their defence?

The foregoing remarks apply to all governments; we now return to England to whose policy our researches are confined.

Among the states which formed the first great confederacy against France, England was one of the last, and cannot therefore be regarded as the originator of that confederacy. As long as Louis XVI. sat on the throne, all interference in the French affairs was carefully avoided by the British government. The French ambassador, *Chauvelin*, remained as representative of his sovereign in London, and was recognised as such, as was also the British ambassador in Paris. Indeed, even when the unfortunate Louis was torn from the throne and plunged with his family into prison, the sympathy of England confined itself to the private demands of her ambassador, whether he could contribute any thing to relieve the wants of the unfortunate prince. The public relations were not changed till after the execution of the royal martyr, and then without a war. The British ambassador was

recalled, and the recognition of Baron Chauvelin, to whom the Convention had sent credentials, was withheld; he soon afterwards received orders to quit England.

These measures certainly not only expressed a just abhorrence, which the execution of the unfortunate monarch had excited, but they implied likewise a refusal to recognise the newly-constituted Republic, and with it the avowal that England would not enter into political relations with it. Although the prospects were in consequence clouded, no hostilities immediately ensued. It is of great importance for the practical purposes of politics, to have a clear understanding, that the provisional breaking off of relations between states does not amount to a declaration of war. Negotiations between two states presuppose in both a regular system of government. How can a government negotiate with a state which itself acknowledges that it is occupied in effecting a revolution, and wishes first to give itself a new constitution, and at the same time a different government.

Other causes, however, soon concurred to render the participation of England in the war unavoidable. Notwithstanding their disavowal of any intention of aggrandisement, the new Republic not only assumed the character of a conqueror, but even scoffed at the laws of nations, which had been hitherto recognised, by immediately appropriating to herself the provinces of Avignon and Savoy which had been

taken from the pope and king of Sardinia. But that which more nearly concerned England was *the Invasion of the Austrian Netherlands,* which followed in the autumn, 1792. These provinces formed, as we observed above, the bridge which connected England with the continent, and above all with Austria. The partial suspension of the embargo upon the navigation of the Scheldt, which rested on the faith of treaties, was a new specimen of the republican code of international law. But that which must have most disturbed the tranquillity of England under the circumstances of those times, was the danger with which the Republic menaced the United Netherlands. At the head of this state stood the House of Orange, which had been for five years past reinstated in its privileges; with this house England, in conjunction with Prussia, had concluded the triple alliance, and in the same had guaranteed to it its prerogatives. It was precisely against this very house, that the attacks of France, in her desire to conciliate or maintain the support of the popular party, were directed. Could a war under such circumstances be avoided? Yet the war was not declared by England, but by France. The 1st Feb., 1793, was the day on which a declaration of war was issued at the same time against England and the Stadtholder.

"What was," says Pitt, in one of his early speeches, "the state of this country with respect to France, previous to the declaration of war on

her part? We then contended, first, that she had broken a treaty with our allies, which we were bound to support: secondly, That she had engaged in schemes of ambition and aggrandisement, inconsistent with the interests of this country and the general security of Europe: thirdly, That she had entertained principles hostile to all governments, and more particularly to our own. In consequence of all these circumstances, you then declared, in addresses to his majesty, that if proper satisfaction was not obtained, a war must be the consequence. But while this was in agitation, they had themselves declared war, and been guilty of a sudden and unprovoked aggression upon this country."

"Acts of hostility," says the minister, upon a later occasion, "had been openly threatened against our allies; an hostility founded upon the assumption of a right which would at once supersede the whole law of nations: a demand was made by France upon Holland, to open the navigation of the Scheldt, on the ground of a general and national right, in violation of positive treaty; this claim we discussed, at the time, not so much on account of its immediate importance, (though it was important both in a maritime and commercial view,) as on account of the general principle on which it was founded. On the same arbitrary notion they soon afterwards discovered that sacred law of nature, which made the Rhine and the Alps the legitimate boundaries of France, and assumed the power,

which they have affected to exercise through the whole of the revolution, of superseding, by a new code of their own, all the recognised principles of the law of nations. They were actually advancing towards the republic of Holland by rapid strides, after the victory of Jemappe, they had ordered their generals to pursue the Austrian troops into any neutral country; thereby explicitly avowing an intention of invading Holland. They had already shown their moderation and self-denial, by incorporating Belgium with the French republic. These lovers of peace, who set out with a sworn aversion to conquest, and professions of respect for the independence of other nations; who pretend that they departed from this system only in consequence of your aggression, themselves in time of peace while you were still confessedly neutral, without the pretence or shadow of provocation, wrested Savoy from the king of Sardinia, and had proceeded to incorporate it likewise with France. These were their aggressions at this period; and more than these. They had issued an universal declaration of war against all the thrones of Europe; and they had by their conduct, applied it particularly and specifically to you; they had passed the decree of the 19th February, 1792, proclaiming the promise of French succour to all nations who should manifest a wish to become free: they had by all their language, as well as their example, shown what they understood to be freedom; they had

sealed their principles by the deposition of their sovereign; they had applied them to England, by inviting and encouraging the addresses of those seditious and traitorous societies, who, from the beginning, favoured their views, and who, encouraged by your forbearance, were even then publicly avowing French doctrines, and anticipating their success in this country; who were hailing the progress of those proceedings in France, which led to the murder of its king: they were even then looking to the day when they should behold a National Convention in England, formed upon similar principles [u]."

After this, the frequently contested question, *who was the originator of the war*, requires no further investigation [x]. Even if France had not first declared it, she would notwithstanding have been the aggressor; for this charge attaches to those who desire war without provocation [y]. Thus then England enrolled herself amongst the belligerent powers. It is necessary to cast a glance at her position at that time with regard to the continent.

Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, and some of the German states, and soon after the whole Empire,

[u] Pitt's *Speeches*, iii. p. 97.

[x] A work, expressly on this subject, appeared from the pen of an Englishman, *Herbert Marsh*, upon the causes of the war between England and France. Leipsig, 1796.

[y] Which party, whether the Girondists, as is asserted, or the violent Jacobin party, made the declaration of war, is of no importance in the solution of this question. And can it be supposed that the last were deterred by any other motive than because the time did not seem opportune?

were already, at this period, in a state of war with France. It was easy at the same time to foresee that other states would take up arms, partly in self-defence, partly, as was the case with Spain, from indignation at the execution of the king. But at this critical juncture, the system of standing armies had been carried on by the principal states of the continent to a degree which was no longer consistent with their resources. These scarcely sufficed to keep the great mass of stipendiary forces from mutiny. The extraordinary expenses of the war exceeded the resources of the states, and rendered it impossible to employ the whole force which they had under arms. England, in respect to naval power, might with good reason calculate upon vanquishing and possibly annihilating the fleets of France; and thus pave the way for the conquest of her colonies. But, however alluring these prospects might be, she could not flatter herself with the hope of thus bringing the war to a termination. Those conquests, however well they might have succeeded, could only, as Pitt himself expresses it [z], have a collateral influence. France at that period, besides having been already by her own fault deprived of her most valuable colony, St. Domingo, did not attach so much importance to the rest, as would have been the case in earlier times. The contest must be decided by a land, and not by a naval force, and the formation of a league with

[z] *Speeches*, l. c.

the continental powers was the natural consequence. A series of alliances, from Portugal to Russia, followed in the same year, 1793. In order to estimate these, and to form an opinion of the general conduct of Pitt, we must place ourselves in his position. England certainly was in a certain sense the centre of the first league against France; but this league remained to a certain degree ineffectual: it was not in the power of the British minister to direct the energies of the allies at his discretion. It was ineffectual with respect to a leading power, Russia. Although Catharine II. as early as March 25, 1793, surpassed all the others in her eagerness to conclude an alliance with England; although she declared herself in a state of war with France; although her voice predominated above all, she still, in spite of all this, did least of any. Her views were directed to other objects, first, to the renewal of the advantageous commercial treaty with England of the year 1766; secondly, and above all, to the carrying into execution her new and unjust design of a partition of the too unhappy Poland, which was effected in this very summer. Thus the certainty of not having Russia for an antagonist was the only advantage which England derived from this connection. Among the other continental powers, Austria and Prussia were naturally those with which the first and strongest connections were formed; after these, came Spain, Sardinia, Portugal, and some

smaller states. Most of these states were in the situation which we have already alluded to, their finances were greatly disproportioned to their military force. The natural consequence was that they sought assistance, where alone they could find it, in Great Britain. Thus not only was the subsidy-system of earlier times renewed, but carried to a much greater extent than it had been before. The war was for the most part carried on at the expense of England. During the eight years which elapsed between 1793 and Pitt's retirement from the ministry, loans to the amount of twenty-three millions sterling, had been on the average yearly advanced by the minister. The British ministry was certainly, on this account, allowed to exercise a great influence in the conduct of the war; yet never so decisive a one as to have the direction of it entirely in their own hands. The plan of every campaign had to be jointly concerted; the continental powers moreover had each naturally their several interests to be regarded. A mere minister of state is not capable, as such, of being unconditionally the soul of a large confederacy. It is only when the statesman and general are combined, as in Marlborough and William III., that this can occur, The wish of the minister was to arm, if possible, all Europe against France. But it was not in his power to accomplish this on a systematic plan, much less to give a permanent and systematic direction to the confederacy.

We must bear this in mind while considering the campaigns of 1793 and 1794. The first was successful. In consequence of the battle of Neerwinden, the French armies were compelled to evacuate Belgium. This gave England an opportunity of taking an active part in the war on the continent. An English-Hanoverian army united itself with the Austrian in the Netherlands, and these provinces became again what they had often been before, the bridge between two allied powers. Even the Republic of the United Netherlands, now covered by the allied armies, appeared as a participator in the common field of battle. But the posture of affairs underwent a change in the following year. The system of terrorism established in France, which left security only in the armies, drove every one to arms capable of bearing them. Her preponderating power, and the new system of warfare which spared no men, decided the question: in the autumn of 1794, Belgium was again in the hands of the French. More severe reverses were soon to follow. An intense frost covered the rivers, the natural bulwarks of Holland, with a sheet of ice. The defence of the republic was impossible. The house of Orange fled to England; and the *patriot party* in expectation of a golden futurity received their new friends with open arms[a].

[a] In January, 1795.

This conquest of the republic had a double effect on the continental policy of England. In the first place it put an end to the direct participation of England in the war on the continent, inasmuch as she had now no field of action on which her armies could enter. Henceforward therefore she was obliged to confine her participation in the continental war to the advice and support which she gave her confederates. A second consequence was the commencement of a dissolution of the league, since one of its members had not only seceded from it, but had even gone over to the enemy. But this first separation was only the precursor of one still greater, to which, in some measure, it contributed. By the summer of 1795, England had lost two of her principal allies, Prussia and Spain.

The secession of Prussia must no doubt be chiefly attributed to financial embarrassments, which the subsidies of England could not relieve, as the main cause lay in the prodigality of its financial administration. But it is no less certain that false political principles had also a material influence upon her. An idea had existed from the early part of the reign of Frederic II., that Prussia and France were natural allies, an idea which France upon every opportunity endeavoured to revive. This idea however, was manifestly grounded on the earlier relations in which France and Ausfria at one time, and Prussia and Austria at another, respectively stood towards each other. So long as the rivalry lasted

between France and Austria, Prussia was for France the most advantageous ally; and after Prussia, by the conquest of Silesia, had entered the field as the antagonist of Austria, France was certainly so for Prussia. How Frederic II. availed himself of this has been shown above. This connection rested solely on political relations, which were in their very nature mutable, and which had actually changed, since Austria and Prussia had become friends, and even allies; from the time that Austria had ceased to be annoyed at the loss of Silesia, Prussia could no longer be called the natural friend of France. But it is a phenomenon of frequent occurrence in politics, that political feelings are frequently called into play, even after the circumstances which gave them birth have ceased. Again, by the conquest of Holland, the position of Prussia in respect to the war was geographically changed. Her western provinces, protected by few fortresses, lay open to every assault. But that which operated most powerfully was, the brilliant prospects which France displayed before her, of future aggrandisement, in the shape of indemnifications; as the limited possessions of Prussia on this side the Rhine remained, from the peace of Basle till the conclusion of the general peace, in the hands of France. Thus England lost one of her principal allies on the continent, though not by any fault of her own; for Pitt still continued to advance subsidies, even when a zealous co-

operation in the war could no longer be expected. Prussia now adopted a system of neutrality; to which Hanover and the other provinces of Northern Germany acceded.

In the course of the summer, Spain also withdrew from the league; the peace which she concluded at Basle, placing her in the condition of a neutral state. Her participation in the war had been founded less on political than on family motives. The Bourbons who were seated on the Spanish throne, regarded the ignominious fate of their house as an insult offered to themselves. But their animosity had gradually subsided, or they thought they had been sufficiently avenged; greater facilities too were here offered for peace, inasmuch as, at least in Europe, no claim had been made to conquest on either side. The cession of her share of St. Domingo to France was, properly, only the fulfilment of an ancient treaty, in which Spain had engaged to resign this possession in return for another held by France—Louisiana.

Thus was the first great confederacy, or as it was then usually expressed, the first *coalition* against France dissolved. Its dissolution cannot be considered otherwise than calamitous, because the object of the war had not been as yet attained. The articles of the peace of Basle were even concluded with the National Convention, which, in spite of all its protestations, could not be supposed to have renounced its revolutionary principles. Thus, too, was exhi-

bited the first example, that England was by no means capable of holding together the league which she had formed. Still, after all, the league was not altogether broken asunder; Austria, the most powerful ally of England on the continent, still remained, and by her successful operations on the Rhine, reanimated her courage. Besides Austria she had also remaining South Germany, Bavaria and its other states. In Italy she had also remaining Sardinia, which from the fortresses of Piedmont was the key of that country. She had also Naples, valuable for her sea-ports. In the west of Europe, she had still left Portugal, whose political relations were determined by her commercial connections. So long therefore, as the war lasted, it might naturally be expected she would earnestly exert herself to draw more closely together the ties which connected her with the other allies. As early as the 18th Feb. of this year, 1795, a new defensive alliance was concluded with Catharine II., with reciprocal guarantees of possessions held by either party, which, like the first, was unproductive of any material consequences; on the 20th May, a contract with Austria; these two were the foundations of the triple alliance, concluded on the 28th September; the conditions of which have not been made known to the public. A new loan was granted to Austria in the same year.

The renewal of the connection with Russia happened in the same year in which Catharine

consummated her designs against Poland, by a third and final partition. England abstained from any active interference in these proceedings. Pitt, in his negotiations respecting the treaty of Russia with Turkey, had experienced how hazardous it was to interfere with the designs of Catharine. Whether the British cabinet would have manifested this passive spirit in more tranquil times, may admit of doubt; that resistance, under the existing circumstances, would have disturbed the good understanding with her allies, and perhaps, if it had been energetic, would have led to a war with Russia, is as evident, as it is improbable that any resistance could have prevented the dismemberment. Nevertheless, the opposition in parliament did not neglect to avail themselves of this ground for assailing the minister. He answered them briefly in his speech of May 10, 1796, in reply to Mr. Fox [b]. "Are ministers to be blamed," said he, "for not doing what it would be hazardous in them to attempt, and would it not be hazardous to propose a mediation where both parties were not ready to agree? To have erected ourselves into arbiters, could only expose us to difficulties and disputes, if we were determined, as we ought to be, to enforce that mediation on the parties who refused

[b] *Speeches*, vol. ii. p. 169. It is a part of the ordinary tactics of the opposition to embarrass ministers by reproaches for having suffered this or that to happen in Europe. The most recent events of history afford evidence of this. The reproaches would have been without doubt much more violent in the opposite case.

to admit it. And what is the great use which the honourable gentleman seems to be so eager to derive from that peace, if so procured? Is it fit that we should go to war in order to prevent the partition of Poland? In general policy, I am ready to confess that this partition is unjust; but it does not go, as is said, to overturn the balance of power in Europe, for which the right honourable gentleman, as it suits his argument, expresses greater or less solicitude; for that country being nearly divided equally between three great powers, it can little contribute to the undue aggrandisement of either."

It was not compatible with the plan of the minister at this time to take up this subject on the different and higher grounds, which easily and spontaneously suggest themselves.

The whole energies of England were thus left to be directed against France, who in this same year obtained a great accession of power by drawing Spain from her neutral position to become her active ally. This she effected by the alliance-compact of August 10, 1796, by which the weaker state completely identified her fortunes with the more powerful, and which necessarily paved the way for its subsequent fate. This connection became immediately of importance to France, inasmuch as it drew into her interest a naval power whose fleet she might expect in some measure would repair the loss of her own. Experience has shown how vain this hope was. The war with Spain necessarily became a

maritime one; and, as formerly happened on the invasion of the United Netherlands, materially contributed to procure for England that sovereign command of the sea, which became afterwards the subject of so many complaints and reproaches. A war with Spain was besides generally very popular in England, and particularly wished for by the British navy, since it promised a rich booty to privateers as well as to ships of the line.

As long therefore as Russia remained inactive, Austria continued to be the principal ally of England, and at the same time the principal foe which France had to encounter on the continent. If Austria were conquered or forced to make peace, the weaker allies must follow of course. The great object of the French government, which had been for a short time in the hands of the Directory[c], was to accomplish this object. Three armies were to make an attempt on three different points to force a way into the heart of this monarchy in the summer of 1796, in order, if possible, to dictate peace in the capital itself. One proceeding from the Lower Rhine under general Jourdan, was to penetrate through Franconia; a second under general Moreau, through Swabia and Bavaria; while another under the new general-in-chief, Bounaparte, drove back the Austrian force in Lombardy. The unsuccessful

[c] In October, 1795, after the completion of the new constitution and the dissolution of the National Convention, the Directory, consisting of five members, was established.

issue of this plan is well known. Austria found in her own imperial House (a discovery of inestimable importance for her cause) the general and hero who held her enemies at bay. Jourdan, defeated at Amberg and Würzburg, hastened back across the Rhine with the relics of his army; Moreau was also obliged to make a retreat. These victories, however, had no effect on Italy. There the commander-in-chief, relying solely upon himself, pursued his own course undisturbed. While those events were taking place in Germany, he completely established the influence of France in Italy; and this country, which had been hitherto only a subordinate seat of the war, was made by him the theatre of its great operations. Here Austria, and with her, England, had a train of allies, among whom Sardinia was in every respect pre-eminent. Her territories are, by their position and their fortresses, the key of Italy. The first object, therefore, of the new generalissimo was to dissever this connection, and to force Sardinia into a separate treaty. A few weeks sufficed for the execution of this project. By the 17th May, 1796, Victor Amadeus saw himself compelled to sign a peace, by which he not only renounced Savoy and Nice, but even received French garrisons into his principal fortresses. Thus England lost one of her allies, who had formed for the last hundred years an important link in the chain of her continental relations, and Austria a friend who had never

been of greater importance to her than at the present crisis. They were now both obliged to depend on their own resources, for no dependence could any longer be placed on the other states of Italy, which were well satisfied if they could obtain by negotiation or purchase an armistice or a peace. Austria might now expect to be attacked in a new quarter, and, to see in the event of her main fortress, Mantua, falling, the French armies in her southern provinces, that being the only impediment to the advance of the enemy. It was invested in July, and no wonder she strained every nerve to save it. Three armies were raised, vanquished, again raised, and after all to no purpose! Mantua, on the 2nd of Feb. of the ensuing year, opened her gates to the conqueror; the rest of Italy had already obtained peace either by submission or negotiation, and an entrance was opened into Carinthia and Carniola, as well as into the south of the Tyrol; it seemed indeed questionable whether the progress of the warrior, who had penetrated into the heart of the state, could be arrested. Napoleon himself was not insensible to the hazard of his situation; but the new system of politics afforded him a resource, by making an amicable arrangement at the expense of a neutral state. The preliminaries at Leoben on the 18th April, which were afterwards transformed with some important alterations into a definitive treaty on the 17th October, at Campo Formio, restored peace to the con-

tinent—the republic of Venice being made the sacrifice.

We shall only consider this peace in relation to England. There was certainly nothing concluded in it which immediately affected this country, but as the English coalition now ceased of itself, the renewal of it was evidently rendered more difficult in future, as Austria, by this peace, in consideration of the indemnification which she obtained, in a large share of the Venetian territory, resigned her portion of the Netherlands in favour of France; the great importance of which, in the mutual relation of both powers, has been clearly demonstrated above. The occupation of the Græco-Venetian islands, which those treaties ceded to France, was another, by no means unimportant, consequence of that peace to England, since they were likely to affect her relations in the Mediterranean and with the Porte.

Thus the great confederation against France was completely dissolved, and at the end of the year 1797, England stood alone, unsupported by any allies on the continent (with the exception perhaps of Portugal[a]) against France and her allies. It now became a great and important question, *whether she should continue the war or conclude a peace?* The opposition lost no opportunity of inveighing against the ministers on

[a] With Portugal also France had concluded a peace on the 20th August; which, however, after the suspension of negotiations with England, had been again formally retracted on the 26th October.

account of the continuance of the war.—"That it was a war without an object. That they combatted principles which ought not to be combatted with arms. That they were willing to make no peace with the republic of France; that they aimed at the restoration of the monarchy, or even of the ancient régime, which could not be effected. What had been hitherto achieved by the war? France was now much more powerful than before the conflict, and there was no hope of being able to reduce her to her ancient boundaries." Such was the language delivered on every opportunity by Fox, by Sheridan, and other leaders of the opposition.

That the British cabinet was not decidedly indisposed to peace, its proceedings had already evinced. In October, 1795, a new government had been established in France, that of the *Directory*. It must be allowed that nothing could then be done till experience had determined by what spirit this new body was animated—whether the revolutionary principles of the conventional government, which had made way for it, had descended upon it, or whether neighbouring states might now dwell near it in security and peace. But, however this might be, it was still a government, and as such, whatever well-grounded apprehensions might at first be entertained, it was the highest, and only recognised authority with which the British ministers could treat. However faint might be their hopes respecting the final result, a door of communication

seemed now opened, and they might, at least, ascertain at what price peace could be purchased. England had already made two attempts at negotiation, and she now made a third by sending over Lord Malmsbury as ambassador. His first attempt, made at Paris (Sept. —Dec. 1796), failed; what hopes could be entertained from the beginning of the final result, where the parties, instead of proceeding heartily and with good faith, began by insisting upon an *ultimatum?* It was, nevertheless, renewed at Lille (July—Sept. 1797, during the negotiations for peace between France and Austria), at first with a better prospect of success, as a party of the Directory anxiously wished for peace; but this party being overpowered by the majority and forcibly driven from office, it again fell to the ground; and, just as the negotiations with Austria were approaching a pacific termination, the British ambassador received orders to quit France, and England was left alone to struggle with the enemy.

Now again the reiterated attacks of the opposition, the loud demands Why he still continued the war? When he hoped to conclude a peace? again compelled Pitt to explain his views of the subject. He spoke them boldly and distinctly. However desirable the restoration of the monarchy in France might be (no one at this time ventured even to think of the reinstatement of the Bourbons) it was not insisted upon as an absolute condition; much less the entire resto-

ration of the ancient form of government. Even with France as a republic peace might possibly be concluded, provided that it could be a secure peace. But since the politics of the Directory clearly showed that it had adopted the revolutionary principles in all their force, Pitt resolutely adhered to his principle: better no peace than an insecure one! "I have never believed," said he[e], "that we could not treat with France as a republic. Whatever I may, in the abstract, think of the kind of government called a republic, whatever may be its fitness to the nation where it prevails, there may be times when it would not be dangerous to exist in its vicinity. But while the spirit of France remains what at present it is, its government despotic, vindictive, unjust, with a temper untamed, a character unchanged, if its power to do wrong at all remains, there does not exist any security for this country or Europe. In my view of security, every object of ambition and aggrandisement is abandoned. Our simple object is security, just security, with a little mixture of indemnification. These are the legitimate objects of war at all times; and when we have attained that end, we are in a condition to derive from peace its beneficent advantages; but until then, our duty and our interest require that we should persevere unappalled in the struggle to which we were provoked. We shall not be satisfied with a false security.

[e] Speeches III. p. 85.

War with all its evils is better than a peace in which there is nothing to be seen but usurpation and injustice, dwelling with savage delight on the humble, prostrate condition of some timid suppliant people. We are not in arms against the opinions of the closet, nor the speculations of the schools. We are at war with armed opinions; we are at war with those opinions which the sword of audacious, unprincipled, and impious innovation seeks to propagate amidst the ruin of empires, the demolition of the altars of all religion, the destruction of every venerable, and good, and liberal institution, under whatever form of polity they have been raised; and this, in spite of the dissenting reason of men, in contempt of that lawful authority which, in the settled order, superior talents and superior virtues attain, crying out to them not to enter on holy ground, nor to pollute the stream of eternal justice. If it be asked whether I am determined to continue the war till the republic be overthrown? I answer, I do not confine my views to the territorial limits of France; I contemplate the principles, character, and conduct of France; I consider what these are; I see in them the issues of distraction, of infamy, and ruin, to every state in her alliance; and therefore I say, that until the aspect of that mighty mass of iniquity and folly is entirely changed; until the character of the government is totally reversed; until by the common consent of the general voice of all men, I can with truth tell parlia-

ment, France is no longer terrible for her contempt of the rights of every other nation—she no longer avows schemes of universal empire—she has settled into a state whose government can maintain those relations in their integrity, in which alone civilised communities are to find their security, and from which they are to derive their distinction and their glory;—until in the situation of France we have exhibited to us those features of a wise, a just, and a liberal policy, I cannot treat with her."

The Directory itself soon realised the views of the British minister. The scandalous proceedings at the congress of Rastadt; the contumacious bearing of the French ambassadors; the seizure of Ehrenbreitstein in the midst of the peace; above all, the surreptitious attack upon Switzerland, and the treatment she received, afforded stronger evidence than the case required. Meanwhile England stood alone on the field of battle; the question was: how and where she should be assailed? The earlier attempts on the West Indies and Ireland had failed;—*the Egyptian expedition* followed.

We propose to consider this extraordinary and remarkable enterprise only in one aspect, as to the influence which it had and must have upon the British continental policy. It soon assumed a greater and more comprehensive form than might have been expected from the nature of the expedition.

The object of this enterprise being the coloni-

sation of the fertile plains of Egypt, the result which France expected from it was properly speaking the acquisition of an important colonial possession, which might not only compensate the loss of the West Indian islands, but by the altered direction which it gave to the whole colonial system, might injure the British colonies in the West Indies; and perhaps even operate upon the relations in the East Indies. How far these projects were feasible or not, may be reserved for a distinct inquiry. It is enough that the apprehensions which they excited took such deep root in England, that the principle was firmly embraced not to lay down the sword until that plan was frustrated,—until Egypt was wrested from the French.

Certainly this war appeared by the distance of its scene from Europe, to have no connection with the British continental policy; indeed from its engaging so entirely the attention and energies of Great Britain in a different part of the world, it rather seemed to produce a relaxation in the continental relations. The contrary, however, was the result. The Egyptian expedition became one of the principal means of bringing about the second great confederacy or coalition against France, which was directed by England —and of which it remained the centre in an equal if not in a still higher degree than it had been in that confederacy which had been dissolved.

The expedition to Egypt thus became so preg-

nant with consequences and so momentous in relation to the British continental policy, that not only were the ancient cords for the most part reknit together again, but new ones were likewise added. Amongst these must be enumerated as more particularly important, *the connection with the Porte.* The storm which raged in the west of Europe had not yet reached this state. Its position, its relations, and its often blissful ignorance, had allowed it to remain neutral. It had been for two centuries and a half the ally of France, without however taking part in her wars. England had had little connection with it. She had wished perhaps, though in vain, to take an interest in its affairs before the conclusion of the last peace; but in this she was not actuated so much by a tender solicitude for the Porte, as by jealousy on account of the growing power of Russia. But now relations had changed;—Egypt belonged to the Porte; which now also discovered by experience that no public law afforded any protection against the political code of the revolution. Its oldest friend despoiled it, without any provocation, of one of its best provinces; and though this proceeding might be inexplicable to them, they were quite sensible that an insult had been offered them, which a semibarbarous people is of all others usually least disposed to brook. The means for gaining the divan failed; their voice was raised for war; and under these circumstances it could not be difficult for the British cabinet,

when war was declared, to find in her an ally. Both expectations proceeded rapidly to their fulfilment. As early as the 12th Sept. the Porte issued a declaration of war against France, and by the 5th of January, 1799, a league was concluded, by which was stipulated mutual assistance, their harbours were closed against the French vessels, and they engaged not to make peace except with mutual consent, and guaranteed to each other their possessions. The alliance of the Porte differed only in one respect from that of the other powers with England. The Porte was the only power which received no subsidies, nor even desired them. This connection was for England, not only of the highest importance in regard to her immediate object and the present war, but it opened to her a new and dazzling prospect of the fortresses in the Mediterranean and the trade in the Levant, which had been hitherto in the hands of the French and Dutch; but if it once passed into hers, it would not be so easy to wrest it back from her. The sequel has shown how these expectations were realised; it was written in the book of fate that the fruits of the expedition to Egypt, if we except its literary advantages, should not be reaped by France, but by England. The importance of this new continental connection is sufficiently obvious.

But the expedition to Egypt was of service to the British continental policy in another respect. At the time it was set on foot, the spirit and cou-

rage of the continental powers were at a low ebb. The haughty tone assumed by the French plenipotentiaries at Rastadt had dispirited and humiliated, as well as exasperated them. A new war was considered inevitable; but all seemed afraid to strike the first blow. Exactly at this crisis, and in this disposition of affairs, the glorious victory of the Nile was achieved by Nelson[f]. This, however did not immediately affect the relations of the continental powers, though it had an indirect influence upon them. This humiliation of the haughty, raised the courage of the oppressed; their confidence in England was revived; her exhortations and offers were listened to with more attention, and what perhaps is almost without a parallel in history, the effects of this victory were much greater in a moral than in a military point of view. The relations of France with Austria were already greatly disturbed. A new war was felt at Vienna to be inevitable. That country was only looking about for allies; negotiations with Russia had already been quietly going on during the interval of repose; it could not therefore be difficult for England to find an opening. It was still more easy at Naples, where the personal influence of the ambassador, or rather of his consort, lady Hamilton, determined the queen, and through her the court, and even excited them to a precipitate rupture, the consequences of which were the

[f] August 1st, 1798.

occupation of Naples and the flight of the king and the court to Sicily.

But a new connecting link in the chain of British continental policy was formed in Russia. The connections with Catharine, as well as their inefficacy have been noticed above. She had retired from the stage[s] and had made room for her son and successor Paul. This period is not only highly interesting as respects the British continental policy, but to the whole state-system of Europe. With it commences *the active participation of Russia in the affairs of the west*, which Catharine had always studiously avoided. And it might be foreseen that this could not easily be again withdrawn, whatever change might take place in the character and policy of the reigning prince. A power of the first order, having once adopted an active participation, cannot easily stand aloof, for any considerable time, even if she wished it, which it is almost absurd to suppose she could do. The Egyptian expedition however had an essential influence in bringing about the co-operation of Russia. The capture of Malta by the French, having wrested this island from its ancient possessors, the knights of the order of St. John, and threatened their order with extermination, imposed on them the necessity of seeking a powerful protector. This they hoped to find in the emperor Paul whom they chose for their grand

[s] Nov. 16th, 1796.

master, and thus drew over to their interest one of the most powerful princes of Europe, who, flattered by the compliment, accepted their offer. The personal character of this prince, who always prosecuted his wishes with vehemence, and the desire he now showed to draw into a league the whole of Europe, and who indeed concluded alliances with Austria, England, (who consented to subsidies,) Naples, Portugal, and even with the old hereditary enemy of Russia, the Porte, removed every obstacle.

These were the elements of *the great confederacy* against France. If we measure it solely by the extent and population of the allied states, it was more powerful than the first. But the *neutrality* which *Prussia* maintained, and with her Northern Germany, left a great chasm which could not be filled up. It was not merely the want of the military force of Prussia which caused this chasm to be sensibly felt, but rather the geographical position of this state. The half of France, the whole northern half of it, according to its line of frontier at that time, was covered by this neutrality; and when after the successful progress of the allied armies, an attack upon the southern half was not impossible, it was obvious how difficult this must be rendered if France could concentrate all her forces here for resistance.

England thus again united the links of her continental policy by this second confederacy, as far as circumstances permitted. She con-

cluded an alliance with Austria, Russia, Naples, and with the Porte. Circumstances did not admit of its being extended to Prussia, or to Sardinia; since, immediately on the breaking out of the war with Naples, the Directory availed itself of that crisis for robbing its proper ally, without the least pretext, of all its possessions on the continent, and for banishing it to Sardinia. England was, it is true, by her subsidies, in a certain sense the centre of this second confederacy; but yet in a less degree than of the first. She was less capable of keeping it together. The Porte received no subsidies. It might be foreseen that its object went no farther than the recovery of Egypt. Russia though she received subsidies, was yet by her position and power virtually independent. But the greatest apprehensions were founded upon the personal character of its sovereign; whose policy was rather influenced by caprice and momentary impressions, than built on any firm principles. But all these things lay beyond the control of the British minister. Whatever expectations he might have formed of this confederacy, he could not conceal from himself the fact that it was but feebly held together. The first result, however, seemed almost to surpass their expectations. They had the good fortune to find great generals; in Southern Germany the Archduke *Charles* was victorious, in Italy the redoubted *Suwarrow*. Still further, in the course of the summer the French armies were

driven back across the Rhine and the Alps; Switzerland was left only half occupied by their troops.

But the year was not to end without the sky which had thus brightened up becoming again overcast; and the germs of dissolution already developed themselves in the confederacy. The apprehensions which the capricious policy of the Russian sovereign necessarily excited were too soon to be realised. What it was which disturbed the relations with Austria, whether the disasters in Switzerland, or the occupation of Piedmont, without its being immediately restored to its legitimate king, has not been cleared up; those with England were deranged by the ill-combined and ill-conducted enterprise against the north of Holland[h]; which afforded the strongest proof that without the co-operation of Prussia no effective attack upon France could be made from the north. Paul I. withdrew from the confederacy, and it was not long before there were reasons to apprehend that he would go over to the other side.

The great alteration of affairs in consequence of the overthrow of the Directorial government and the elevation of general Buonaparte, after his return from Egypt, to the post of first consul, or regent of the French state, could not immediately exercise any considerable influence on the continental relations of England. The peace

[h] Aug. and Sept. 1799.

which he offered to England in a letter to the king, altogether at variance with the customary forms of diplomacy, clearly could not be brought about, for this reason, because it was scarcely credible that the proposal made in this manner was seriously meant. The relations of England with Russia were virtually dissolved; those with the Porte had only reference to Egypt; those with Austria and the states of Southern Germany were all, as far as regards the continent of Europe, she could reckon upon. But even these were destined to be torn from her by the campaign of 1800. The battle of Marengo restored the ascendancy of France in Italy; the advance of Moreau through Suabia and Bavaria, and last of all his victory at Hohenlinden, opened a passage to the Austrian provinces. Austria saw herself driven to negotiations, which brought on the peace at Luneville, and the breaking off of her connections with England, which, without this, would have naturally followed, was made a preliminary condition of this treaty[1].

Thus with the exception of the Porte and Portugal, this second confederacy against France was also dissolved; and England for the second time stood almost alone: unconquered to be sure as formerly, as inaccessible to assault as ever, and with the confident expectation that the liberation of Egypt would sooner or later

[1] England exempted Austria herself from her engagements Dec. 31, 1800; which, according to the last subsidy and alliance-treaty, June 20, 1800, would have continued to the end of February, 1801.

be effected, of which, indeed, the capture of Malta, compelled by famine to surrender [k], seemed to afford her a pledge. But the implacable hatred and indefatigable policy of her adversary found means to set new enemies upon her; and to raise a new storm, of which the altered relations with Russia formed the materials. A league of the northern powers against England was now effected.

The notion of the armed neutrality, which Catharine had originated, was not extinct. It was in the nature of things that so long as peace continued, during which there were no enemies, and therefore no neutrals, it should slumber, because it admitted of no practical application. But it was obvious that it would not be neglected in new wars, in which circumstances should favour a revival of the scheme.

England had certainly given occasion for its restoration: not only were the old subjects of controversy renewed, they were even multiplied and augmented. The meaning of contraband was extended to a degree unheard of before; even corn and provisions were reckoned as such, in the vain hope that France might be reduced to submission by famine. One of the favourite ideas of Pitt was to ruin the commerce, and, above all, the maritime commerce, of France, because he fancied he had discovered the means thereby of forcing her to a peace. The allied

[k] Sep. 1801.

powers readily concurred in his views; it was a standing article in the leagues which were formed to close their harbours against the French shipping. The only alternative, therefore, that France had left, was to carry on its trade in the ships of neutral nations; but never was England less disposed to tolerate this than at the present time. The pressure, therefore, necessarily fell on those neutrals which had a traffic of their own, in which class only the northern powers of Europe could be reckoned. No sooner was the principle once admitted, that an enemy's goods in neutral ships was fair booty, than the claim to search neutral ships became a direct consequence of this admission; and who could fail to perceive what disputes and altercation such searches must lead to, whether the property of an enemy should be discovered or not.

The assertion, *that the neutrality of the flag protected the cargo,* even though the property of an enemy, cannot be proved from the law of nature, but rests upon conventional principles of international law, founded either on mere custom or positive compact[1]. The idea of neutrality, according to our conception of it, extends only to the notion that every neutral ought to be at liberty to offer for sale, to belligerent parties the products of its own country, (so far as

[1] In order not to interrupt the thread of the inquiry, I have thought it better to investigate the claims of the armed neutrality, considered in this point of view, in an appendix to the present treatise; the more so, because with the majority of readers, the ideas on this subject can hardly be sufficiently accurate.

they are not acknowledged to be contraband,) as its own property; as well again as to fetch, as its own property, the goods which he has bought of these and paid for, but not to offer them for sale to others as the property of the people engaged in the war. As far as practical policy is concerned, it is most important to observe, that the whole question may be of greater or less importance according to the different relations and the position of the belligerent nations; and that it is therefore scarcely to be expected, that the conventional policy on the question should be always consistent and universally agreed upon. Let us consider for example the case of a people whose wealth and power chiefly depends upon its maritime commerce, and, above all, upon an active trade with its colonies; can it be supposed for a moment, that its opponent, in case it be powerful enough to hinder it, will quietly suffer that commerce now to be carried on in foreign ships instead of in its own? And above all will it quietly suffer this trade not only to be carried on to the extent which was customary in time of peace, but even to a still greater, from the ports of the colonies, which were formerly closed against foreigners, being now thrown open by the colonists for the conveyance of their products; their own ships being excluded from trafficking[m]. Would a naval power at war with

[m] On the British side, the question is best elucidated by Pitt in his speech on the 2nd Feb. 1801. *Speeches*, III. p. 220, sq. *First*, on the ground of international law, because the admission of the right of neutral

Spain, allow foreign ships to convey to her stores from Peru and Mexico, without which perhaps she would be obliged to give up the contest? We are here speaking only of the general principle and the consequences which flow from it; far be it from us to vindicate the abuse to which the rejection of it has led. Far be it from us to justify it, if more than the goods which upon search have been found to belong to the enemy, if perhaps even the ship itself has been confiscated, with all its cargo.

The revival of the project of an armed neutrality was a consequence of the perfect unanimity into which the regent of France had succeeded in drawing the then sovereign of the Russian empire. The revival of this measure might seem the more surprising since it was a measure of Catharine II., which Paul I. was otherwise certainly not disposed to revive. It was now followed up with all the impetuosity which marked his character: not only Denmark and Sweden, but Prussia also was obliged to accede to it, or to run the risk of being treated as an enemy. The claims were the same as under Catharine, only in consequence of a remarkable incident, a new one had been annexed. A Da-

flags in specific treaties is only an exception to a right recognised as a rule. *Secondly*, on the ground of convenience, because the greatness and preponderating weight of England as a naval power, and consequently her greatness generally rests upon the maintenance of the principle hitherto received; since otherwise her enemies would have uncontrolled supplies of naval stores from the Baltic. *Thirdly*, on the ground of positive compacts which are opposed to it. See below in the Appendix.

nish convoy, accompanied by a frigate[n], was compelled to undergo a search; whereas according to the maritime laws in force up to that time, the convoy of a man of war furnished security, that the vessels under her protection had no contraband goods on board.

By the institution of this league England was placed in a state of hostility towards this half of Europe. The determination of the question, whether the claims of the armed neutrality are, on a general view, compatible with the law of nations or not, we will leave to theorists; that England, under existing circumstances, could not suffer the commerce of its enemy to be freely carried on under neutral flags, we believe no practical statesman, whose judgment is unbiassed by party prejudice, will deny. Indeed we have no hesitation in asserting that an international maritime law will never be established further than on paper, so long as that principle shall be maintained in its full extent; the present vast importance of maritime commerce to many of the states will not permit more. The just censure to which England was amenable in those times does not lie, in our opinion, in her refusal to recognise that principle, but in the unjust extension which she gave to her claims and to her proceedings respecting prizes. If she had only confined her claims to the seizure of the enemy's goods; if she had exercised strict

[n] The frigate Freja; she was taken and brought to England.

justice in every thing else, and treated neutrals as neutrals, the whole contest might perhaps have been superseded.

Be that as it may, it was no longer possible for England to avoid the conflict. The measure which Paul I. employed in seizing upon all English ships in his ports, was equivalent to an act of hostility; and in politics as well as in private life, it is an acknowledged principle that a state cannot submit to an affront without degrading itself. A British fleet passed through the Sound; the attack upon Copenhagen followed[o]; and perhaps no blood would have been spilt if it had been known on the 2nd April at Copenhagen what had transpired on the 24th of March, at Petersburg.

The succession of Alexander to the Russian throne had the happiest effects on the continental relations of England. The northern league dissolved of itself (there had indeed been only a partial acquiescence in its formation) immediately the new emperor offered the hand of friendship to England. It fell to the ground without leaving behind any permanent traces of its existence; nothing was determined respecting the principles of international maritime law; even the claims of England were, to a certain extent, tacitly recognised. She had, though not strictly allies, yet at least friends, in the north. The armed neutrality now survives only in his-

[o] April 2, 1801.

tory; it is scarcely possible that it should again exist in Europe; though it may possibly be recalled into being by America.

The British policy was directed to other objects. The time approached when England was to retire from the conflict, which she had now carried on for nine years without intermission. The deliverance of Egypt had removed out of the way a main obstacle, and facilitated the negotiations; preliminaries of peace were signed in the autumn of the same year[p], and its final ratification at Amiens was only delayed by the determinations respecting Malta to the spring of the following year[q]. Even on this occasion the peace was not concluded by the same minister who had conducted the war. *William Pitt* had previously made way for his successor Addington; though not by compulsion as formerly, but voluntarily. In full possession of power, and of a majority in parliament, he resigned his post, because his opinions on Catholic Emancipation, which was to crown his great and newly achieved work, the union of Ireland and England into one kingdom, did not harmonise with those of his sovereign. And if George III. did not hesitate to accept the resignation of his long-tried counsellor and friend, rather than wound his conscience, the minister showed no less tenderness for the dictates of his, by quitting office, when his measures were no longer approved[r]:

[p] Oct. 1, 1801. [q] March 25, 1802.

[r] That this was the real cause, there is not a shadow of doubt. The

though poor and in debt, notwithstanding the treasures of the world had passed through his hands, he preferred retiring from the glory of supreme power into private life[s]. The peace of Amiens, however, may in some measure be considered as his peace, inasmuch as it was not concluded without his approbation and advice. His successor was not his opponent, but the friend of his youth; the ex-minister did not take his seat as was usually the case on the opposition bench, but on the right hand side, on which for so long a series of years he had directed and determined the destinies of Great Britain, and not unfrequently of Europe.

By virtue of the peace of Amiens, Great Britain ceded all her conquests in the colonies, together with Malta, to their former possessors, with the exception only of Trinidad and Ceylon, which Spain and the Batavian republic were obliged to cede to her; very dear conquests in return for a debt of 300 millions sterling, which the war had cost[t]! But who will take so nar-

very expressions of the great statesman on the subject, with the tenderest forbearance to his sovereign, may be seen in the speech of May 13, 1805. *Speeches*, iii. 420, sq.

[s] Feb. 9, 1801.

[t] That portion of these sums which went abroad consisted partly of loans which England guaranteed—capital as well as interest, and which, until their reimbursement, make up a part of the national debt; partly in subsidies, that is, sums granted by virtue of compact for certain services, which cannot therefore be reclaimed. Only two loans were advanced during the two administrations of Pitt to Austria, in 1795, to the amount of £4,600,000; and in 1797, to the amount of £1,620,000. The loan to Portugal, amounting to £600,000, was first made in 1809. *Hamilton, National Debt*, p. 133. The whole amount of the subsidies and loans,

row a view of this peace? We have already on another occasion given our opinion of the criterion by which the value of this peace should be estimated; namely, how far the object, for which the war had been commenced and carried on was attained by it. This was not merely the conquest of a few islands; but two objects of a much higher character; the maintenance of the constitution and independence of Great Britain, and the freedom and independence of Europe against the encroachments of France.

The first of these objects was accomplished; but not the other: the predominating power of France was so far from being broken, that it was greater than ever; considered in this point of view the peace of Amiens can only be considered as a disgraceful one. All that can be alleged in vindication of it will be found in the speech which Pitt delivered after the ratification of the preliminaries[u]; his opinion on this point is the more impartial because being no longer minister he is not vindicating his own measures.

His main argument is; "One object we must give up, which is no longer attainable; we are disappointed in our hopes of being able to drive France within her ancient limits; but we have fulfilled our obligations towards our allies; the

which flowed to the continent on account of the government, is computed at £45,800,000. *Nebenius on Public Credit*, in German, sect. 13, note. I know not from what data; and I question whether the amount of the subsidies admits of being so accurately determined, since it cannot be known in what instalments they were really paid.

[u] On Nov. 3, 1801.—*Speeches*, iii. p. 270, sq.

glory of the English arms has not been tarnished; and Great Britain possesses the means of opposing France if she should farther extend her ambitious views. Further, the re-establishment of the French monarchy is equally impossible but we have survived the violence of the revolutionary fever, we have seen Jacobinism overthrown; and its new government is only a state of transition towards a monarchy [x]."

But, with all that, it is difficult to palliate the impolicy of neglecting to make some definitive arrangements in the treaty respecting the relations of the continent; and of at once stipulating for the evacuation of the Batavian republic by the French. England remained virtually excluded, in a political sense, from the continent; she could no longer interfere in its affairs; she could only look on in silence, while France might lay down regulations at her pleasure, affecting the continent from the Tagus to the Vistula. The moment she attempted to raise her voice, she was met with the contemptuous answer, "The peace of Amiens, and

[x] *Speeches*, iii. p. 270, sq. That this and, if possible, the restoration of the old monarchy, or at least, of the reigning family, had always been the object of his wishes, the minister does not dissemble. It was not without the most painful struggle that he could abandon this hope!

Me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam
Auspiciis et sponte mea componere curas;
Urbem Trojanam primum dulcesque meorum
Relliquias colerem, Priami tecta alta manerent
Et recidiva manu posuissem Pergama victis!

he exclaims with Æneas. What would his great spirit have felt if fate had permitted him to look for the space of ten years into the future!

nothing but the peace of Amiens." The question was, whether such a state of things could last?

This question soon became answered; in the short space of a year the war again broke out; it was declared by England. The first consul, occupied with the consolidation of his power, and the re-conquest of St. Domingo, could hardly wish for it at this moment! and although some of his proceedings might with justice be made the subject of complaint, they could hardly be considered sufficient to furnish ground for a new war. We certainly do not mean to deny that a war might also have been wished for by him, while he was preparing the steps on which he mounted to the great object of his ambition—the imperial throne. But, notwithstanding this, it still seems certain that he could not have wished it to break out so soon. It indeed becomes a question, whether, according to the particular plans of the British ministry, the peace was intended to be anything more than an armistice, which they only wanted for the purpose of collecting new forces; and this question we could scarcely help answering in the affirmative, if another, and a much more natural solution did not present itself. It was not till after the peace that the English discovered they had committed an error —an error which they now saw with all its consequences. When the surrender of the conquered colonies as stipulated for was made, only one condition remained unfulfilled, the surren-

der of the rocky island of Malta. The reasons why the evacuation of this was refused will scarcely be regarded by an impartial posterity as anything more than so many subterfuges; and the true ground can now only be sought in the awakened consciousness that more had been conceded than ought to have been. This was incontestably a political blunder which we are not disposed to justify; although aware that the renewal of the war was the only possible means of repairing it; the war, however, would nevertheless have been continued if this had never happened.

England commenced this new contest without a single ally on the continent; and the terror of the overwhelming power of France could afford her but little hope of procuring any, unless perhaps the haughty spirit of the French ruler should produce them. The occupation of Hanover, a neutral power, proved the complete nullity of the German empire, but was also a proof how much the Prussian cabinet of that time could submit to, in admitting without hesitation the army of a conquering power into the heart of its states, in order to maintain its precarious neutrality.

The first great effect of this war on the continent, was the erection of the French imperial throne. The formal restoration of an hereditary monarchy in France, could not, considered in itself, be repugnant to the views of England; but the claims which were involved in this new title, were of such a nature, that they defeated the

prospect of peace, and must have inspired England with hopes of soon being able again to find allies on the continent; and who, indeed, could doubt that every exertion would be made to effect this object, when Pitt, for the second time, with the same principles, the same powers of mind, though not of body, was placed at the head of affairs[y]. The war itself bore altogether a peculiar character. Here were two hostile powers determined to wreak on each other all the mischief they could; and yet, one being strong at sea, the other by land, they could scarcely come at each other. In France, the popular mind had been so accustomed, during the preceding war, to the loss of colonies, which had scarcely been restored, that the operations of the English in this respect could hardly move it. No field of battle offered itself on which the British troops could disembark. Great preparations, however, were made for effecting a descent on England. A numerous army was assembled on the opposite coast; a whole fleet of armed and unarmed transports were built to carry it over. But that, without a fleet to keep open the communication with France as well as to cover the passage and landing, an invasion was impracticable, or, if indeed effected, that it would end in the defeat and capture of the invading army, was obvious to every one, as was, consequently, that such a design could never have been seriously planned; still

[y] On 28th May, 1804.

there were not wanting political, and even military writers, who believed it! But on the other side, it was not less certain that the threatening attitude assumed could not last for ever, nor even long; that the interest of the new ruler of France required a new war; and experience has now shown, that the descent upon England was only a mask, under which he might prepare for another object.

Its effect upon England, however, was to drive the whole nation to arms. The military spirit was not only everywhere aroused, but it breathed a new power; a different kind of enthusiasm was naturally kindled in the breasts of troops who were to fight for their country, their families, and their homes, to that felt by men enlisted for foreign war and conquest.

The labours of Pitt were not in vain. He succeeded in the summer of 1805 in bringing about a third confederacy against France. The transfer of the left bank of the Rhine to that country; the distribution of all the ecclesiastical states, on the German side, among those whom she wished to favour; the powerful movements upon Switzerland, and above all, upon Italy, rendered it no longer problematical, that with this predominating power of France and the use she made of it, an independent European state-system could not possibly exist. To the aid of these sound political considerations, there came about this time an event, no less powerful, which roused the moral indignation of nearly all Europe

—the arrest and murder of the duke d'Enghien This was not only, as it has generally been admitted, a crime, but unquestionably a great political error, which cannot find an apology in the design of renewing a continental war, as that might have been effected without it.

From this moment the sullen spirit of Prussia began to work, and, much increased by the contumelious dismissal and treatment of her ambassador, communicated itself to the cabinets of Austria, Prussia, and, above all, to Sweden. The more keen the sense of justice that prevailed in the dispositions of those princes, the more deeply must they have felt the wound thus given it; and, however undefined the plans of these sovereigns, a party from this time soon became formed, not only of men, but even among women of the first rank, in the courts of Vienna and Berlin, as well as of Petersburg, which preferred a renewal of the war to a dishonourable peace. Thus, when Pitt re-entered the ministry, he found the national feeling and cabinets of the continent favourable to his designs. How much was done by British ambassadors to win over completely, posterity, perhaps, will discover, when their official reports shall at some future time be entrusted to a second Coxe[z]. England thus became, in the fullest

[z] On the internal relations of the court of Vienna, at that time, and the English ambassador, Lord Paget, some interesting information will be found in the treatise, *Die Franzosen in Wein*, 1805, *in Europëische Annalen*, 1809, st. 6, the authenticity of which, however, we cannot vouch for, as we are unacquainted with the sources from which they are derived.

sense of the word, the centre of the third confederacy against the domination of France, as Russia, Austria, and Sweden, entered into a treaty of alliance with her, upon conditions of receiving certain subsidies; unfortunately, the wavering policy of Prussia placed the same obstacles in the way as had occurred before. The disastrous issue of the campaign of 1805, which, after the battle of Austerlitz, was followed by the peace of Presburg[a], rent asunder the alliance with Austria; that with Russia was prolonged in little more than in form; that with Sweden was rather more trouble than profit; and new relations with Prussia soon followed, which led to war, or at least to a warlike attitude.

Pitt was destined to live just long enough to see his hopes and his plans frustrated. Intelligence of all these misfortunes, for which the recent victory at Trafalgar (21st October) could not compensate, reached him while yet on his death-bed[b]. However deeply this may have distressed him, he had still two grounds of consolation left. First—The consciousness that his life had been devoted to a good and just cause; and next to that, the certainty that his principles would survive in the school of statesmen which he himself had formed[c]. But dismal as were the

[a] December 26, 1805.

[b] His death, the 23d January, 1806, happened on the same day of the month as that on which he had taken his seat in the House of Commons twenty-five years before.

[c] A Portland, Liverpool, Sidmouth, Canning, Perceval, Castlereagh, Vansittart, etc.

prospects when his eye closed in death, they became still darker soon after his departure; and it became of the greater importance that his principles died not with him.

A most striking proof of this was afforded by the administration which succeeded, and which wished to follow a different line of policy. This was a coalition ministry; that is to say, one formed of men of opposite parties and professing different principles; a ministry which can hardly ever succeed for any length of time in England. At its head were placed Lord Grenville, as first lord of the treasury, and Mr. Fox as secretary of state for foreign affairs[d]. By this arrangement the foreign policy of England was entrusted to one, who, all his life, had been the distinguished antagonist of Pitt. Even since the death of both, public opinion has been divided in England as to which has the higher claim to praise; a question the more difficult to settle, because party spirit almost necessarily exercises an influence over all who seek to answer it. With all his genius; with all his brilliant talents as a speaker, Fox, nevertheless, wanted that calmness of mind which is indispensable to the great man of business in practical life. He saw through the medium of his passions, and spoke under their influence; while the steady coolness of Pitt is displayed no less in the details of business than in his speeches, which, never overcharged, seem only designed to

[d] In February, 1806.

convince. Which of the two took the most correct view of the great objects, which, in their time, excited so much interest, is perhaps no longer a matter of doubt. We may admire Fox as a speaker and as an historian; but who will now attempt to rank him beside his great rival as a statesman? Even great good nature in him was dangerous, as it inclined him too much to judge of others by himself.

When Fox was placed at the helm of affairs, the continental relations of England, with the exception of those of the north, were dissolved; in Germany they could not be easily renewed, as the southern states had leagued themselves with France, and the confederation of the Rhine, which was afterwards formed, rendered it altogether impossible. With Spain the war was again renewed; with Prussia the relations were doubtful [e]. They soon, however, became decidedly hostile, as Prussia, in compliance with the dictates of France, took possession of Hanover. Fox rightly judged that such an insult to his sovereign was not to be tolerated. The declaration of war which ensued, was unanimously approved in Parliament, in the address of thanks voted in reply to the king's

[e] After the capture of the Spanish galliots, (4th October,) the relations of England and Spain have been so diligently investigated by a celebrated writer, that I deem it only necessary to refer to them:—*Fr. Gens authentische Darstellung der Verhältnisse Zwischen England und Spanien*, 1806. I agree with the author, that England was justified in treating Spain as an enemy at any time, yet not without a previous declaration of war. The more strenuously England contended for the maintenance of international law, the more important it became that she should observe its forms.

speech. A terrible blow to Prussian commerce.

Fox was scarcely settled in the ministry, before he showed his desire to negotiate a peace; and accordingly he availed himself of the first opportunity of communicating his sentiments to the enemy. A plan having been formed for the assassination of Napoleon, Fox sent information of it to him, and thus had the opportunity he wished for of entering upon negotiations with that potentate. Their many interruptions and slow progress during the whole summer, only served to evidence the weakness of the declining minister; while, by the overthrow of the German empire, the establishment of the confederation of the Rhine, and the more and more warlike attitudes assumed towards Prussia, Napoleon clearly betrayed his ulterior designs. Fox continued to negotiate, and suffered himself to be put off with one proposal after another, which, from their very absurdity, ought to have convinced the most short-sighted politician that they were only meant to delude. A short time before the breaking out of the war with Prussia, he expired[f]. His administration had merely served as a foil for that of Pitt. The war against Prussia and Russia, which was terminated by the peace of Tilsit, (July, 1807,) only falls within the sphere of this inquiry, from the influence which it had upon the continental relations of England opening negotiations with

[f] On 16th September, 1806.

that potentate. The emperor of France succeeded in drawing Russia over to his side; and had not Gustavus Adolphus, with untimely pertinacity, which soon cost him Finland, and even his throne, adhered to his engagements, every tie by which England was still connected with the continent, would have been snapped asunder; and even this last was soon broken.

Of all the states of the north, Denmark alone—a power both military and naval—had been able to maintain its neutrality; but even this was destroyed by England's demanding the surrender of her fleet, and enforcing this demand by the bombardment of her capital[g].

Whether or not this transaction was a breach of the law of nations, still remains undecided, even among the English themselves. If the British ministry had, as they alleged—and in all probability such must have been the case—positive intelligence, that, by express stipulations in the late treaty, Denmark was to be forced into the war, and that Copenhagen was to become the rendezvous of the naval and military forces of the north, could it be an infraction of the law of nations to anticipate this event, especially as England only required the surrender of the Danish fleet, on condition that it should be restored at the end of the war, and did not proceed to enforce its surrender till this had been refused? The course of events will always bring on cases

[g] September 7, 1807.

respecting which nothing has been determined in any code of international law. Those proofs, however, have not been made public; and even if they were, who could blame the Danish government for refusing to comply with such a demand? Who, indeed, could blame that nation for regarding the attack as a violation of the law of nations? Be this, however, as it may, it would have been more noble for England to await the attack on the open sea, the theatre of her glory, especially as there could be no possible doubt as to the issue.

Thus the celebrated *continental system* of Napoleon might be said to be realised against England, who was now shut out from every port of the continent, from Petersburg to Cadiz. An armed neutrality was now no longer the question, for, generally speaking, neutrality was no longer tolerated, but that great commercial war was set on foot against England, which gave rise to a tissue of decrees, every where characterised by passion and hatred. These, in the end, had no other result beyond that of warning politicians, that if they listen to any voice, save that of reason and reflection, they must expect the blow, intended for others, to fall, at last, with increased force, upon their own heads. Napoleon's continental system, which was to exclude the English from every port, had eventually the effect of re-opening them all to her.

As in the physical, so in the political world, no unnatural condition can last for ever; and if

Napoleon had not hastened the catastrophe by new deeds of violence, it must, in some way or other, however tardily, have come to pass at last. The designs upon the Spanish peninsula were the first, and those against Russia the second step towards it. In the former, England had, if not an ally, at least a friend, in Portugal. Though it was impossible to save this state, yet here, nevertheless, the British continental policy celebrated its first triumph by its success in persuading the court to emigrate to Brazil[h], and found a new kingdom on that side the Atlantic. A greater triumph, however, awaited it. The ill-treated Spain was roused by her injuries, and a new kind of league was formed, not with a cabinet, but with a nation[i], which, notwithstanding the frequent vicissitudes of fortune, could not be dissolved. In Spain, the first abyss opened itself, which swallowed up the stores and the armies of Napoleon; a second still more terrific he himself prepared in Russia. It would be superfluous to recount the history of those great events, which rendered it possible for armies advancing from the Tagus and the Volga to combine and cooperate in the heart of France; which hurled the despot from the tottering but imperial throne, and brought about that which Pitt had expressed as the object of his wishes, though no longer of his hopes—the restoration of the ancient dynasty to the newly-erected regal throne of France. Let us rather be permitted to conclude this

[h] November 30, 1807. [i] January 14, 1809.

treatise with some general observations on the co-operation of England in the re-establishment of the European state-system, and on its present relations with the continent.

After the inquiry which we have instituted, no one will dispute the title of England to the glory of having taken the greatest and most effectual part in the liberation of Europe, and the restoration of an independent state-system to our part of the globe. Her share, however, has often been much exaggerated, particularly by Englishmen. England certainly achieved much; but England did not, and, as repeated experience has shown, could not, achieve it alone. It was utterly impossible for her to do so, without the co-operation of continental allies, such as Spain and Portugal, Germany and Russia.

After the catastrophe in Russia which took place, without the participation of England—when the oppressed began to burst their bands asunder,—it was perfectly natural that the old allies of England should again rally around her; and history will never forget the almost incredible exertions which she made from the years 1813 to 1815[k], which plainly prove that she did not think the liberation of Europe could be purchased too dearly.

Even Pitt, had he survived the glorious triumph of his principles, could hardly have done more!

[k] The aggregate of the loans advanced in the three years, amounted to no less than £142,000,000 according to the real, and £222,000,000 according to the nominal value.—*Nebenius* über den credit. Anhang, § 5.

Yet, all this could only succeed by a uniting of the various powers; for what could gold, however indispensable, do alone; iron, after all, was to decide the contest.

England certainly prides herself, with justice, on being the only power that never bowed her neck during the whole course of that tempestuous period. But England should not forget that she is mainly indebted for this to her insular position. During that political storm, which periodically, as it were, desolated the countries of the continent, she alone could assure to herself that internal tranquillity, without which those peaceful arts, from which alone she derives resources for her great exertions, could not have been continued with such unexampled vigour and prosperity. Besides this, it was undoubtedly of peculiar advantage to all Europe, not only that the wooden walls of England rendered her impregnable, but that she was precisely the state, above all others, fitted by her constitution to keep alive those political opinions, the decline of which could never have been more injurious and lamentable than at this particular period. By this, too, was prepared the amazing influence which England has had, since the struggle for constitutional governments has become general in Europe. Her example was held forth, not in order that her constitution should be adopted as a general model, (which heaven forfend,) but as one from which proper notions might be formed of liberal institutions of this kind: such were now introduced

into France, the Netherlands, and several German states.

England is now ranked as one of the five leading powers who determine the relations of the European state-system. It has connected itself with them without any surrender on its own part; it has therefore reserved to itself the power of stepping forward as a mediator whenever it may be necessary. A continental policy like the last, founded upon loans and subsidies, can hardly ever occur again, at least to the same extent; but if this, as we think we have shown it to be, was, on the whole, beneficial for Europe, are we not thereby justified in hoping, that she will become still more, in future, the mediating power. Thus, then, we think we may conclude this treatise, without exposing ourselves to the imputation of blind partiality, with a wish for Britain, which is, at the same time, the best we can form for the continent and for our native country.—ESTO PERPETUA!

APPENDIX

(P. 340.)

An Examination of the Questions respecting the claims of the Armed Neutrality.

THE claims of the armed neutrality embrace four questions, which must be kept quite distinct, if we wish to examine them properly. The first is: Whether free ships make free cargoes? The second is, The determination of what are called contraband or forbidden wares? Thirdly, Whether a convoy is a protection from search? Fourthly, When are ports to be considered in a state of blockade? We shall proceed to examine each separately.

I. *Whether Free Ships make Free Cargoes?*

This celebrated maxim, which may be regarded as the basis of the new maritime code, which the armed neutrality wished to introduce, involves two distinct propositions. First, that neutral ships may carry their own wares (provided they are not contraband, of which below,) to all ports, whether belonging to neutral or belligerent parties, provided they are not in a state of blockade. By virtue of this principle, therefore, the neutral powers wished to have the free navigation and

conveyance of their own products, (with the above restrictions,) not only to the ports of all neutral states, but also to those of France, Spain, Holland, etc. But what was of still greater consequence, they desired also, in the second place, free permission, not only to carry to those countries their own wares, and to bring away what they had purchased there, but also to convey, where and how they pleased, the goods of the belligerent parties; thus, for example, freely and at discretion to take in French wares and French property, without let or hindrance from British ships or privateers; and British wares, without let or hindrance from the enemies of England.

The great practical importance of this question will become apparent at once to all who bestow the slightest reflection upon it. Were it generally recognised by maritime powers, maritime wars would no longer exercise any very considerable influence on the trade and commerce of nations. It is true, a war might, perhaps, hinder the belligerent powers from continuing their trade in native vessels, unless, indeed, sufficiently strong at sea to protect it; but this evil would be easily remedied, as neutral vessels would naturally hasten in sufficient numbers to their ports, in order to transport their merchandise to whatever part of the world it might be destined. Instead, therefore, of a maritime war being, as it is now, extremely prejudicial to neutrals, from the many annoyances it occasions them, it would, in this case, be advantageous to them, as they could not

fail to be employed in the transport of merchandise, and consequently to draw a large share of the carrying-trade to themselves.

From this it will readily be perceived why England, in her present position, was so deeply interested in withholding her assent to this principle. England is powerful enough at sea to protect her own commerce, and to carry it on, even in the midst of war, without any considerable interruption. Her enemies are notoriously too weak to do the same, consequently in war their trade is almost annihilated. Had England, then, recognised this principle, the trade of France, Holland, etc., would have immediately revived, which England, who naturally regards her commerce as the mainspring of her power, is, for that very reason, anxious to repress. Those countries, it is true, would not have been able, had England given way, to carry on their trade in their own bottoms; but they would have carried it on in the ships of neutrals, or under neutral flags.

The extent, as well as the importance of this principle, being then sufficiently obvious, let us now see what may be determined respecting it; whether it is founded on the principles of natural law, upon the tacit agreement of civilised nations, or, finally, on express stipulations between the now contending powers.

The law of nature, as applied to war, or pure military law, recognises no further principle than "I injure my enemy wherever I can," and in this

is comprised, "I take from him his property wherever I can." The principle of free ship, free cargo, in its full extent, that is, if it means an enemy's goods are to be free in neutral ships, is, therefore, not recognised by pure military law. It would be difficult, therefore, to prove from the law of nature, that if Englishmen and Frenchmen wage war with each other, they are, notwithstanding, obliged to spare each other's property. This does not, however, imply, that if an Englishman finds the goods of an enemy in a neutral ship, he is immediately justified in taking possession of the *ship*, for the mere conveyance of an enemy's wares, obviously involves no act of hostility towards him; but it cannot, with any truth, be asserted, on the principles of natural law, that he is bound to let the property of an enemy escape free.

But why this appeal to the law of nature? It is, happily, now universally understood, that this is no longer admitted as a rule in modern warfare. It is one of the fairest fruits of civilisation, that states only war with states, not with private individuals, to which, unhappily, privateering (and that, viewed in the most favourable light, is nothing better than piracy on a limited scale,) still forms an exception. It is, therefore, evident, that in determining this question, we must not have recourse to the law of nature, but to conventional law or express compacts.

The next question, therefore, is, whether the principle, "free ship, free cargo," has *ever* been

generally observed? this *ever* being limited to what has been introduced among the civilised nations of Europe in the two last centuries. In order to determine this, we need only cast a glance over the history of the wars since the treaty of Westphalia, and we shall find this question answered in the negative thus far: Neutrals have certainly generally laid claim to it, but belligerent powers, *during war*, have never been willing to recognise it.

In the great war which Louis XIV., in 1688, commenced with almost the whole of western Europe, the right of neutral flags was expressly denied on the side of England, while William III. went so far as at once to forbid all communication with France. It was also in vain that the Dutch, who were the greatest sufferers, made representations to him respecting it. He gave the most suitable answer which could be given to these representations—"Let this be the canon law."

In the eighteenth century, the question respecting the rights of neutral flags was not agitated till after the close of the war of the Spanish succession. It was first brought forward in the great northern war which still continued. That it did not arise during the Spanish war, was owing to the peculiar situation of the parties; in the west of Europe there were no neutrals, and the eastern powers had enough to do amongst themselves. Another and a stronger reason was, that Holland, during the war, though hostile to

France and Spain, still carried on a tolerably extensive trade with these two countries, which England either could not, or would not, hinder. But the trade which the Dutch, as neutrals, carried on in the Baltic, soon brought the matter to a crisis. Charles XII. refused to recognise the right of neutral flags; the Swedish privateers captured indiscriminately all vessels bound to ports of the enemy, so that Holland and England were obliged to send, 1715, a combined fleet to the Baltic for the protection of their commerce.

On the breaking out of the war between Spain and England in 1739, and the war of the Austrian succession in 1740, in which Holland remained neutral as long as she could, the dispute was again revived. The English having captured a great number of Dutch vessels, on their way to Spain, the latter complained, and appealed expressly to the commercial treaty of 1674, in which England had recognised the principle of "free ship, free cargo," in respect to them; but nothing of any consequence was settled.

No further progress had been made, when, in 1743, the war between Russia and Sweden broke out. The latter power again refused to concede to the Dutch the right of neutral flags, and the latter were once more compelled to send a fleet to protect their trade in the Baltic.

The seven years' war had scarcely broken out, in 1756, before the Dutch renewed their old complaints against England. Desirous to turn their neutral position to account, and that under

the protection of the neutral flag they might be allowed to carry on the trade between France and her colonies, more especially the West Indies, the latter again appealed to the commercial treaty of 1674. But the English, admitting their claims just as little as before, made prizes of their merchantmen whenever they found them bound to an enemy's port, or laden with an enemy's goods.

Thus matters went on till the breaking out of the American war. During its course the complaints about the oppression of neutral shipping became again very loud. An armed neutrality was negotiated in 1780, by Catherine II., the basis of which was the maxim, "*free ship, free cargo.*" England certainly did not formally recognise this principle; but she tacitly submitted to it, as she felt herself obliged to succumb to the circumstances of the time.

This survey, we think, will make it quite clear that this principle was very far from having been ever generally recognised in the course of the war by tacit agreement, though it certainly was, once and again, by separate treaties between individual powers, but concluded, for the most part, in time of peace. *Büsch,* in his Geschichte der Zerrütung des Seehandels, (*History of the Obstructions to Maritime Commerce,*) has taken the trouble to enumerate these singly, and has found thirty-six treaties for, and only fifteen against, this principle. But what remedies did these treaties provide? No sooner did a war break out, than

the nations who had contracted them, felt themselves at liberty to violate their obligations, and made such partial arrangements as suited their own interest. This was done, not only by England, but by most of the other states, *whenever they felt themselves sufficiently strong to do so;* and who can say that the like will not happen again?

Let us now address ourselves to the *second* question, which is closely connected with this.

II. *What is Contraband?*

When two states are at war with each other, it is scarcely possible for any obligation to arise out of it affecting a third party in respect to its commerce, so as to preclude it from selling certain articles, even though they should be directly intended for carrying on the war, provided it supplies them fairly to the highest bidder. But supposing the said state should be willing to sell them to one state and refuse them to another, this would expressly indicate a disposition to favour one at the expense of the other; and the state thus acting could no longer be regarded as a neutral power. According to the principles of natural law, therefore, nothing contraband, under the above-stated condition, can exist. This, however, is not the place for investigating this question further; it is, besides, a matter of perfect indifference what opinion may be formed respecting it, as the conventional law of nations has long since decided otherwise respecting it. In this, to

wit, an important difference is established between various articles: I. Those directly used in warfare, such as ammunition, arms, and all kinds of ready-made weapons. II. Those which only indirectly serve for that purpose, such as unwrought iron, copper, ship-timber, etc., from which must be distinguished, III. Those which have properly no reference to the war, such as provisions, fine linen, cloths, etc.

All treaties of commerce, without exception, which have been concluded during the last few centuries, between European states, and have contained definitions of what is contraband, agree in this, that the articles, No. I., are interpreted as such. The agreement in this is so general, that the more precise definition of it, or the enumeration of the several articles, has become a standard formulary, which always recurs *totidem verbis*, as may be seen in the various acts of neutrality which have been published. Consequently it is a generally recognised principle of positive European international law, that all articles directly used in warfare, attempted to be conveyed by neutrals to nations engaged in war, immediately become contraband.

But however general the agreement may be, that these articles are interdicted, it is by no means so generally agreed that they are exclusively so. It has more frequently happened, indeed, that the European powers, especially on the breaking out of a war, have interpreted as contraband whatever they thought proper, and have

consequently made No. II., and even No. III. so, just as it might happen to suit their convenience. The English, it must be confessed, were not behind hand in doing this; but then it must not be supposed that they did it alone. Others, as for example, Sweden, have gone as far, or even farther; but, as they had not the same power to enforce their views as the English had, the inconvenience resulting therefrom was not so sensibly felt.

Several circumstances, and particularly the following, have contributed to extend the meaning of contraband: First, It is quite natural that a belligerent nation should feel sore in seeing articles conveyed to its enemies, which, though not yet wrought into arms and implements of war, may soon become so, and in all probability are designed for that purpose. Secondly: It is well known, that in the present day, the western maritime powers obtain the greatest part of their ship-timber from the northern and eastern countries of this part of the world. In naval wars, the aim for a long period has been, and never more so than at the present moment, not only to annihilate the enemy's fleets, but to obstruct as much as possible the building of new ones. The ardour with which England has pursued this object, is known to every one. For this reason, therefore, ship-timber is one of the articles which England insists upon being included in the list of contraband goods; while, on the other hand, the northern powers are especially interested in

having it omitted, as it forms the bulk of their exports. If to this we add (as was the case in the war of the Revolution,) the endeavours made to embarrass the enemy by impeding the conveyance of provisions, or generally to weaken him by the complete annihilation of his commerce, without respect to the losses which neutrals may thereby sustain, it will easily be perceived that, eventually, every thing will be reckoned as contraband which is not ballast, and, consequently, that all trade with an enemy's country will be virtually suspended.

Whatever opinions may be formed as to the legality and good policy of this proceeding, the following points we think will now be clear: In the first place, according to the generally recognised international law of Europe, only the immediate necessaries of war can possibly be regarded as contraband; and if, in the second place, other articles should also be interpreted as such, this must be settled, as an exception to the rule, by express treaties between the several nations, unless mere force is to supersede right.

These principles appear to be at present actually recognised by both parties. For not only is the restriction, which the existing special treaties of individual powers exhibit, expressly recognised in the act of neutrality, in the definition of contraband; but, on the other hand, the minister in the debates of the British parliament, appeals also expressly to the existing

treaties of commerce with the northern powers [a]. An analysis of these, therefore, can alone afford us a deeper insight into the question.

The treaties of commerce quoted in parliament were that with Sweden of 1661; that with Denmark of 1670; and that with Russia of 1793. The continuance of these was expressly asserted; whether it was recognised on the other side or not, is irrelevant to the question, which entirely turns upon the stipulations which the treaties contained.

In the treaty with Sweden [b], the following articles are those which require to be noticed:

Art. V. "The ships, goods, and ships' crews of either nation, shall, under no pretence, either publicly or privately, either by general or special command, be laid under arrest, detained, or in any way treated with violence in the ports of either country."

Art. XI. "Although it has been settled between the two powers, that neither shall succour the enemy of the other, this is not to be so understood as that all commerce and traffic with the enemy of a belligerent party shall be interdicted to a neutral ally. It shall only be decided that no wares which are contraband, and of course no gold, provisions, arms, (here follows the usual form,) shall be conveyed to the enemy of the other; otherwise, if they should be cap-

[a] Vide the speech of Pitt, February 2, 1801, in *Speeches*, iii. p. 229.

[b] It will be found at length in Schmauss, Corpus Juris gentium Academicum, p. 2302, and in the other well-known collections.

tured, they are to be considered lawful booty. Neither of the contracting parties is to support the enemy of the other, either by selling or lending him ships; yet each of the parties shall be at liberty to trade with the enemy of the other, and to convey to him wares of every description, with the exception of those above specified, without molestation, excepting to harbours and places in a state of blockade."

Art. XII. "But in order that an enemy's goods may not be concealed under neutral names, ships, as well as stage wagons, shall be provided with passports and certificates (the formula of which is inserted at length). If in this case the ships of neutral powers shall fall in with the ships of war or privateers of the others, the first shall only be required to produce their papers, without being liable to further search or molestation. Should they not be provided with papers, or if otherwise there should be any urgent cause for suspicion to warrant the searching of the ship, (which is only to be permitted in these cases,) then, if an enemy's goods shall be discovered, these shall be lawful prize, but the rest shall be immediately restored."

If, then, this treaty was recognised as the basis of the maritime law between England and Sweden, by both these powers it will follow:

First. That the principle, "free ship, free cargo," had not, between England and Sweden, the extent which was conceded to it in the armed neutrality. It must be admitted, certainly, that

Sweden is allowed to carry on a free trade in neutral property (not contraband) to an enemy's port, which is not blockaded; yet *not* to convey an enemy's property. Sweden would not dare to convey French or Dutch merchandise under her flag.

Second. The definition of contraband admits this further extension, that besides the direct necessaries of war, money also and provisions are included under it; but not the indirect necessaries of war; not the principal products of Sweden, iron, copper, and ship-timber. Sweden would certainly at the present time readily acquiesce in this extension, because she wishes to check the export of specie, and is no longer in possession of the rich corn-lands about the Baltic, which she had in 1661.

Such, then, are the relations between England and Sweden, according to those treaties: now follow those between England and Denmark. They are founded, according to the speech of the minister in parliament, on the treaty of 1670.

In that, the commercial treaty which was concluded between Charles II. and Christian V., the articles X. XI. contain the definition of what was contraband. But we need not go back even to that source, for by a later convention, which was signed on 4th July, 1780, (a few days before Denmark acceded to the first armed neutrality,) an explanation of that article has been given, which here follows[c]:

[c] Vide Marten's Recueil, etc. etc., ii. p. 102.

"But in order to leave no doubt respecting what is understood by contraband, it is agreed that this designation comprises nothing but arms, as cannon, etc. etc., (here follows the usual formula,) as well as timber, pitch, copper in plates, sails, hemp, cordage, and, in a word, every thing which serves for the equipment of a ship; yet with the exception of unwrought iron and planks. As for the rest, it is expressly declared, that under the designation of contraband shall not be comprehended any kind of provisions, such as fish, flesh, corn, etc. etc., the conveyance of which to hostile ports, if not under blockade, is always to be allowed."

Now, although Denmark, as early as 9th July, 1780, acceded to the armed neutrality, yet this document was not abolished nor infringed, since in that convention the definition of contraband was expressly referred to the existing treaties between the several powers; so again the acceding to the second armed neutrality did not abolish it, since, notwithstanding the general restriction of contraband to immediate necessaries of war, yet the annexation of this proviso, without infringing the existing compacts between the several powers, leaves it in full force. It is obvious, therefore, that Denmark, by her commercial contracts with England, was, with regard to contraband goods, so far bound more strictly to consider every thing which has reference to the building and equipment of ships as comprised in the definition; but not, on the other hand,

provisions and money, which Sweden had recognised as such.

Lastly, as regards Russia, the British minister referred in his speech to the convention of 1793. This convention is the treaty of alliance which Catharine II. at that time concluded with England against France [d]. It contains, Art. XI., the definition: "That not only all kinds of supplies and provisions are to be regarded as contraband, but that they will also, on both sides, generally injure, in every possible way, the French commerce," so that the idea of contraband is certainly here taken in its widest extent.

After this investigation there still remain to be considered the two other points which formed the subject of controversy, viz.:

III. *Are Neutral Ships under Convoy liable to Search or not?*

This question was, as is well known, affirmatively answered on the part of England, and negatively on the part of the other states; and although Denmark promised in the last contest not to allow her ships, for the present, to convoy, she nevertheless refused, in any way, to recognise the principle of search. The whole tone of the proceeding rather showed that the Danish government regarded the assertion of the oppo-

[d] Politisches Journal, 1793.

site principle as a main point, on which not only the interests of commerce, but also the honour of her flag, and, indeed, in some degree even the independence of herself as a state, was concerned.

But in order to exhibit this subject in its true light, it is necessary to explain first somewhat more distinctly what the idea of convoy involves in maritime affairs and in maritime law.

A convoy is well known to be a guard of one or more men-of-war, which the state grants to a number of merchant vessels for their protection. It is not, therefore, a private, but a public affair. But the granting of a convoy according to the received maritime law, involves the following:

I. When the state grants it, then only armed ships in the service of the state can be used for that purpose, in which case it is however of no consequence to what class they belong. Therefore, privateers, which perhaps are bought for the purpose, or even other armed vessels, which private persons cause to be fitted out, would have no legitimate claim to the privileges of a proper convoy. II. When the neutral state grants a convoy, it immediately gives security that the merchant vessels contain no wares, which, according to general maritime law, or specific treaties with particular powers, are contraband. In short, the merchant vessels before they are taken under convoy, must be previously subjected to a strict examination of their papers, which must be conducted by the commanding officer

of the convoy. In Denmark, probably also in Sweden and Russia, the commanding officer himself is even made responsible for it. III. It is not, therefore, every ship which can, at its own discretion, obtain convoy even if its papers are in perfect order. The state does not readily undertake the responsibility for foreign ships. It is more usual for each state to allow only its own ships to convoy. Agreements, however, may easily be entered into, especially where several powers bind themselves to an armed neutrality, which may occasion deviations from the rule.

Hence it will be clearly seen why this disputed point is regarded, especially by neutrals, as a question of honour. The search of a convoy is tantamount to a refusal to accept the given security, and the pledged word of honour of a state, and the denial of a right which has been hitherto conceded to every independent state as such. The correspondence which passed between the Danish government and the British Chargé-d'Affaires at Copenhagen, perhaps exhausted every thing which can be said on this subject.

Some readers will perhaps ask whether something has not been determined on this point in the commercial treaties. But in no single known treaty, and not even once in the acts of the armed neutrality of 1780, has there been the slightest mention made of it; doubtless because in the European maritime law which existed before that time, the freedom of a convoy was taken for granted. That is to say, it is obvious that the

opposite claim could never be preferred by any European power which is not possessed of a similar decisive preponderance at sea to that which Great Britain has at present.

IV. *When are Harbours to be considered as Blockaded.*

In the earlier treaties nothing was decided on this point, because the answer was self-evident: *when they are really blockaded.* But England gave to the phrase an extension of meaning which few will be prepared to justify, that the bare declaration, 'that a port is blockaded, at once constitutes a blockade.' Indeed this was then extended even to the whole line of coast. In consequence, the Act of Neutrality contains this just definition, Art. III. "That the name of a blockaded port belongs only to that which is blocked up by a number of ships of war lying before it and stationed sufficiently near, that the entrance cannot be hazarded without manifest danger; and that the vessel which steers its course in that direction shall not be regarded as acting in opposition to the convention until it makes the attempt to effect an entrance, either by force or stratagem, after it has been apprised of the condition of the harbour by the commander of the blockading squadron."

THE END.

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